

THE WORKS OF JAMES BUCHANAN



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THE WORKS  
OF  
JAMES BUCHANAN

Comprising his Speeches, State Papers,  
and Private Correspondence

Collected and Edited  
By  
JOHN BASSETT MOORE

VOLUME XI  
1860-1868



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THE WORKS  
OF  
JAMES BUCHANAN

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TO MR. BAKER.<sup>1</sup>

*(Private & Confidential.)*

WASHINGTON, 5 Sep: 1860.

MY DEAR SIR/

Somebody sent me the enclosed slips. If General Foster has "made a very able & powerful speech fully endorsing the position of Judge Douglas on the Territorial question," I do not think he will be elected Governor of Pennsylvania. I draw this inference from letters which I receive from the interior of the State from good Democrats when speaking of Judge Douglas & Squatter Sovereignty. Notwithstanding, I heartily desire his election, because it may be the means of defeating Lincoln.

From yr. friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

J. B. BAKER, ESQ.

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TO MRS. BAKER.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON 5 September 1860.

MY DEAR MADAM/

Many thanks for the copy of my letter to your Grandfather in 1821. I assure you I prize it highly as containing my first

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

impressions of the House of Representatives. I have said nothing of Mr. Randolph in it which I should now desire to change.

Sincerely and cordially reciprocating your expressions of regard for myself, I remain very respectfully.

Your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MRS. J. B. BAKER.

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TO MR. CORYELL.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON 26 September 1860.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 24th Instant & am happy to learn that our friends were so greatly in the ascendant in your County Convention. I know how much of this is due to your indefatigable energy in the good cause. Never was there a period in our history when so much of good or of evil depended upon the result of the election in the Keystone State. Our friends now confidently expect to carry every State south of the Potomac, though Virginia by some is yet considered doubtful. Our friends, also, write us that Tennessee is safe.

Your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

LEWIS C. CORYELL, ESQ.

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<sup>1</sup> Coryell Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



TO QUEEN VICTORIA.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, October 6, 1860.

TO HER MAJESTY, QUEEN VICTORIA:—

When I had the honor of addressing your Majesty in June last I confidently predicted a cordial welcome for the Prince of Wales throughout this country, should he pay us a visit on his return from Canada to England. What was then prophecy has now become history. He has been everywhere received with enthusiasm, and this is attributed not only to the very high regard entertained for your Majesty, but also to his own noble and manly bearing. He has passed through a trying ordeal for a person of his years, and his conduct throughout has been such as became his age and station. Dignified, frank, and affable, he has conciliated wherever he has been the kindness and respect of a sensitive and discriminating people.

His visit thus far has been all your Majesty could have desired, and I have no doubt it will so continue to the end.

The Prince left us for Richmond this morning with the Duke of Newcastle and the other members of his wisely selected suite. I should gladly have prolonged his visit had this been possible consistently with previous engagements. In our domestic circle he won all hearts. His free and ingenuous intercourse with myself evinced both a kind heart and good understanding. I shall ever cherish the warmest wishes for his welfare.

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 231. To this letter the Queen made the following reply:

WINDSOR CASTLE, November 19, 1860.

MY GOOD FRIEND:—

Your letter of the 6th ultimo has afforded me the greatest pleasure, containing, as it does, such kind expressions with regard to my son, and assuring me that the character and object of his visit to you and to the United States have been fully appreciated, and that his demeanor and the feelings evinced by him have secured to him your esteem and the general good will of your countrymen.

I purposely delayed the answer to your letter until I should be able to couple it with the announcement of the Prince of Wales's safe return to his home. Contrary winds and stress of weather have much retarded his arrival, but we have been fully compensated for the anxiety which this long delay has naturally caused us, by finding him in such excellent health and spirits, and so delighted with all that he has seen and experienced in his travels.

He cannot sufficiently praise the great cordiality with which he has been



The visit of the Prince to the tomb of Washington and the simple but solemn ceremonies at this consecrated spot will become a historical event and cannot fail to exert a happy influence on the kindred people of the two countries.

With my respectful regards for the Prince Consort,  
I remain your Majesty's friend and obedient servant,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

---

TO MISS MACALESTER.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, October 10, 1860.

MY DEAR LILY:—

I have received your favor of the 8th, announcing your engagement, and most sincerely and ardently do I hope that your marriage may prove auspicious and secure your future happiness and prosperity. I need not assure you that I feel all the interest which devoted friendship can inspire in your permanent welfare.

everywhere greeted in your country, and the friendly manner in which you received him; and whilst, as a mother, I am grateful for the kindness shown him, I feel impelled to express, at the same time, how deeply I have been touched by the many demonstrations of affection personally toward myself which his presence has called forth.

I fully reciprocate towards your nation the feelings thus made apparent, and look upon them as forming an important link to cement two nations of kindred origin and character, whose mutual esteem and friendship must always have so material an influence upon their respective development and prosperity.

The interesting and touching scene at the grave of General Washington, to which you allude, may be fitly taken as the type of our present feeling, and I trust of our future relations.

The Prince Consort, who heartily joins in the expressions contained in this letter, wishes to be kindly remembered to you, as we both wish to be to Miss Lane.

Believe me always your good friend,

VICTORIA R.

<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 245. Miss Lily L. Macalester, daughter of Charles Macalester, Esq., of Philadelphia. Her engagement was to Mr. Berghmans, secretary of the Belgian legation in Washington. The letter of Miss Macalester is given in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 244.

I had thought that "the prospect of a dreary spinsterhood" would not have impelled you into an engagement, without saying a word to your superannuated bachelor friend, but when young ladies have determined to marry they will go ahead.

May you enjoy all the blessings in your matrimonial state which I ardently desire, and you so richly deserve. Always your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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FROM MR. RHETT.<sup>1</sup>

*(Private and Confidential.)*

CHARLESTON, NOV. 24, 1860.

MY DEAR SIR:

You know that for many years I have been a personal and political friend of yours. I have truly sympathised with you in the difficulties which have surrounded your administration of a Government tottering amidst the contending sections of the Union. Pardon me, therefore, if I now take the liberty to say a very few words to you, on the condition of things in this State.

South Carolina, I have not a doubt, will go out of the Union—and it is in your power to make this event peaceful or bloody. *If you send any more troops into Charleston Bay, it will be bloody.* Now, in giving you this information and opinion, I trust you will not suppose that I intend to *direct* your judgment as to your course of duty, but simply to *inform* it. If you have any hopes of reconstructing the Union, after South Carolina shall have seceded, they will, in my judgment, be utterly defeated by any demonstration of coercion in the Bay of Charleston. Believe me, Dear Sir,

Yours most sincerely,

R. B. RHETT.

JAMES BUCHANAN,  
President of the United States.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

TO MR. HOLT.<sup>1</sup>

30 Nov. '60.

MY DEAR SIR

I send you the enclosed. As I do not intend to make any but a general reference to the reports of the other Departments on account of the length of my message, it might seem invidious to make yours an exception. I have no doubt it will speak ably for itself.

Should you approve the enclosed, please to fill up the date left in blank.

Suggest any alterations.

Your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MR. HOLT.

---

FROM GOVERNOR LETCHER.<sup>2</sup>

(*Private.*)

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA,

December 1st: 1860.

DEAR SIR:

I fear from some rumors I have seen in the papers that Gov. Cobb has determined to retire from the Cabinet. The withdrawal of any one or more of the members of your Cabinet in the present condition of affairs would produce serious and alarming results. Let nothing of this kind occur, if it be possible to prevent it. In haste, I am truly

Yr. friend,

JOHN LETCHER.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE PRESIDENT.

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<sup>1</sup> Holt Papers, Library of Congress.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

FOURTH ANNUAL MESSAGE,  
DECEMBER 3, 1860.<sup>1</sup>

FELLOW-CITIZENS OF THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

Throughout the year since our last meeting, the country has been eminently prosperous in all its material interests. The general health has been excellent, our harvests have been abundant, and plenty smiles throughout the land. Our commerce and manufactures have been prosecuted with energy and industry, and have yielded fair and ample returns. In short, no nation in the tide of time has ever presented a spectacle of greater material prosperity than we have done, until within a very recent period.

Why is it, then, that discontent now so extensively prevails, and the union of the States, which is the source of all these blessings is threatened with destruction?

The long continued and intemperate interference of the northern people with the question of slavery in the southern States has at length produced its natural effects. The different sections of the Union are now arrayed against each other, and the time has arrived, so much dreaded by the Father of his Country, when hostile geographical parties have been formed.

I have long foreseen, and often forewarned my countrymen of the now impending danger. This does not proceed solely from the claim on the part of Congress or the territorial legislatures to exclude slavery from the Territories, nor from the efforts of different States to defeat the execution of the fugitive slave law. All or any of these evils might have been endured by the South, without danger to the Union, (as others have been,) in the hope that time and reflection might apply the remedy. The immediate peril arises, not so much from these causes, as from the fact that the incessant and violent agitation of the slavery question throughout the North for the last quarter of a century has at length produced its malign influence on the slaves, and inspired them with vague notions of freedom. Hence a sense of security no longer exists around the family altar. This feeling of peace at home has given place to apprehensions

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<sup>1</sup> S. Ex. Doc. 1, 36 Cong. 2 Sess. I. 3-28.

of servile insurrections. Many a matron throughout the South retires at night in dread of what may befall herself and her children before the morning. Should this apprehension of domestic danger, whether real or imaginary, extend, and intensify itself, until it shall pervade the masses of the southern people, then disunion will become inevitable. Self-preservation is the first law of nature, and has been implanted in the heart of man by his Creator, for the wisest purpose; and no political union, however fraught with blessings and benefits in all other respects, can long continue, if the necessary consequence be to render the homes and the firesides of nearly half the parties to it habitually and hopelessly insecure. Sooner or later the bonds of such a Union must be severed. It is my conviction that this fatal period has not yet arrived; and my prayer to God is, that he would preserve the Constitution and the Union throughout all generations.

But let us take warning in time, and remove the cause of danger. It cannot be denied that for five and twenty years the agitation at the North against slavery has been incessant. In 1835, pictorial hand-bills and inflammatory appeals were circulated extensively throughout the South of a character to excite the passions of the slaves, and, in the language of General Jackson, "to stimulate them to insurrection and produce all the horrors of a servile war." This agitation has ever since been continued by the public press, by the proceedings of State and county conventions, and by abolition sermons and lectures. The time of Congress has been occupied in violent speeches on this never-ending subject; and appeals, in pamphlet and other forms, indorsed by distinguished names, have been sent forth from this central point and spread broadcast over the Union.

How easy would it be for the American people to settle the slavery question forever, and to restore peace and harmony to this distracted country! They, and they alone, can do it. All that is necessary to accomplish the object, and all for which the slave States have ever contended, is to be let alone and permitted to manage their domestic institutions in their own way. As sovereign States, they and they alone are responsible before God and the world for the slavery existing among them. For this the people of the North are not more responsible, and have no more right to interfere, than with similar institutions in Russia or in Brazil.

Upon their good sense and patriotic forbearance, I confess, I still greatly rely. Without their aid it is beyond the power of any President, no matter what may be his own political proclivities, to restore peace and harmony among the States. Wisely limited and restrained as is his power under our Constitution and laws, he alone can accomplish but little for good or for evil on such a momentous question.

And this brings me to observe, that the election of any one of our fellow-citizens to the office of President does not of itself afford just cause for dissolving the Union. This is more especially true if his election has been effected by a mere plurality and not a majority of the people, and has resulted from transient and temporary causes, which may probably never again occur. In order to justify a resort to revolutionary resistance the federal government must be guilty of "a deliberate, palpable, and dangerous exercise" of powers not granted by the Constitution. The late presidential election, however, has been held in strict conformity with its express provisions. How, then, can the result justify a revolution to destroy this very Constitution? Reason, justice, a regard for the Constitution, all require that we shall wait for some overt and dangerous act on the part of the President elect, before resorting to such a remedy. It is said, however, that the antecedents of the President elect have been sufficient to justify the fears of the South that he will attempt to invade their constitutional rights. But are such apprehensions of contingent danger in the future sufficient to justify the immediate destruction of the noblest system of government ever devised by mortals? From the very nature of his office, and its high responsibilities, he must necessarily be conservative. The stern duty of administering the vast and complicated concerns of this government affords in itself a guarantee that he will not attempt any violation of a clear constitutional right.

After all, he is no more than the chief executive officer of the government. His province is not to make but to execute the laws; and it is a remarkable fact in our history that, notwithstanding the repeated efforts of the anti-slavery party, no single act has ever passed Congress, unless we may possibly except the Missouri compromise, impairing in the slightest degree the rights of the South to their property in slaves. And it may also be observed, judging from present indications, that no probability exists of the passage of such an act by a majority



of both houses, either in the present or the next Congress. Surely, under these circumstances we ought to be restrained from present action by the precept of Him who spake as man never spoke that "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." The day of evil may never come unless we shall rashly bring it upon ourselves.

It is alleged as one cause for immediate secession, that the southern States are denied equal rights with the other States in the common Territories. But by what authority are these denied? Not by Congress, which has never passed, and I believe never will pass, any act to exclude slavery from these Territories. And certainly not by the Supreme Court, which has solemnly decided that slaves are property, and like all other property their owners have a right to take them into the common Territories and hold them there under the protection of the Constitution.

So far then as Congress is concerned the objection is not to anything they have already done, but to what they may do hereafter. It will surely be admitted that this apprehension of future danger is no good reason for an immediate dissolution of the Union. It is true that the territorial legislature of Kansas on the 23d February, 1860, passed in great haste an act over the veto of the governor, declaring that slavery "is and shall be forever prohibited in this Territory." Such an act, however, plainly violating the rights of property secured by the Constitution, will surely be declared void by the judiciary, whenever it shall be presented in a legal form.

Only three days after my inauguration the Supreme Court of the United States solemnly adjudged that this power did not exist in a territorial legislature. Yet such has been the factious temper of the times that the correctness of this decision has been extensively impugned before the people, and the question has given rise to angry political conflicts throughout the country. Those who have appealed from this judgment of our highest constitutional tribunal to popular assemblies, would, if they could, invest a territorial legislature with power to annul the sacred rights of property. This power Congress is expressly forbidden by the federal Constitution to exercise. Every State legislature in the Union is forbidden by its own constitution to exercise it. It cannot be exercised in any State except by the people in their highest sovereign capacity when framing or amending their State

constitution. In like manner it can only be exercised by the people of a territory, represented in a convention of delegates, for the purpose of framing a constitution preparatory to admission as a State into the Union. Then, and not until then, are they invested with power to decide the question whether slavery shall or shall not exist within their limits. This is an act of sovereign authority and not of subordinate territorial legislation. Were it otherwise, then indeed would the equality of the States in the Territories be destroyed and the rights of property in slaves would depend not upon the guarantees of the Constitution, but upon the shifting majorities of an irresponsible territorial legislature. Such a doctrine, from its intrinsic unsoundness, cannot long influence any considerable portion of our people, much less can it afford a good reason for a dissolution of the Union.

The most palpable violations of constitutional duty which have yet been committed consist in the acts of different State legislatures to defeat the execution of the fugitive slave law. It ought to be remembered, however, that for these acts neither Congress nor any President can justly be held responsible. Having been passed in violation of the federal Constitution, they are therefore null and void. All the courts, both State and national, before whom the question has arisen, have, from the beginning, declared the fugitive slave law to be constitutional. The single exception is that of a State court in Wisconsin; and this has not only been reversed by the proper appellate tribunal, but has met with such universal reprobation, that there can be no danger from it as a precedent. The validity of this law has been established over and over again by the Supreme Court of the United States with perfect unanimity. It is founded upon an express provision of the Constitution, requiring that fugitive slaves who escape from service in one State to another shall be "delivered up" to their masters. Without this provision it is a well known historical fact that the Constitution itself could never have been adopted by the convention. In one form or other under the acts of 1793 and 1850, both being substantially the same, the fugitive slave law has been the law of the land from the days of Washington until the present moment. Here, then, a clear case is presented, in which it will be the duty of the next President, as it has been my own, to act with vigor in executing this supreme law against the conflicting enactments of State



legislatures. Should he fail in the performance of this high duty, he will then have manifested a disregard of the Constitution and laws, to the great injury of the people of nearly one half of the States of the Union. But are we to presume in advance that he will thus violate his duty? This would be at war with every principle of justice and of Christian charity. Let us wait for the overt act. The fugitive slave law has been carried into execution in every contested case since the commencement of the present administration; though often, it is to be regretted, with great loss and inconvenience to the master, and with considerable expense to the government. Let us trust that the State legislatures will repeal their unconstitutional and obnoxious enactments. Unless this shall be done without unnecessary delay, it is impossible for any human power to save the Union.

The southern States, standing on the basis of the Constitution, have a right to demand this act of justice from the States of the North. Should it be refused, then the Constitution, to which all the States are parties, will have been wilfully violated by one portion of them in a provision essential to the domestic security and happiness of the remainder. In that event, the injured States, after having first used all peaceful and constitutional means to obtain redress, would be justified in revolutionary resistance to the government of the Union.

I have purposely confined my remarks to revolutionary resistance, because it has been claimed within the last few years that any State, whenever this shall be its sovereign will and pleasure, may secede from the Union in accordance with the Constitution, and without any violation of the constitutional rights of the other members of the Confederacy. That as each became parties to the Union by the vote of its own people assembled in convention, so any one of them may retire from the Union in a similar manner by the vote of such a convention.

In order to justify secession as a constitutional remedy it must be on the principle that the federal government is a mere voluntary association of States, to be dissolved at pleasure by any one of the contracting parties. If this be so, the Confederacy is a rope of sand, to be penetrated and dissolved by the first adverse wave of public opinion in any of the States. In this manner our thirty-three States may resolve themselves into as many petty, jarring, and hostile republics, each one retiring from the Union without responsibility whenever any sudden excite-

ment might impel them to such a course. By this process a Union might be entirely broken into fragments in a few weeks which cost our forefathers many years of toil, privation, and blood to establish.

Such a principle is wholly inconsistent with the history as well as the character of the federal Constitution. After it was framed with the greatest deliberation and care it was submitted to conventions of the people of the several States for ratification. Its provisions were discussed at length in these bodies, composed of the first men of the country. Its opponents contended that it conferred powers upon the federal government dangerous to the rights of the States, whilst its advocates maintained that, under a fair construction of the instrument, there was no foundation for such apprehensions. In that mighty struggle between the first intellects of this or any other country it never occurred to any individual, either among its opponents or advocates, to assert or even to intimate that their efforts were all vain labor, because the moment that any State felt herself aggrieved she might secede from the Union. What a crushing argument would this have proved against those who dreaded that the rights of the States would be endangered by the Constitution. The truth is, that it was not until many years after the origin of the federal government that such a proposition was first advanced. It was then met and refuted by the conclusive arguments of General Jackson, who, in his message of the 16th January, 1833, transmitting the nullifying ordinance of South Carolina to Congress, employs the following language: "The right of the people of a single State to absolve themselves at will and without the consent of the other States from their most solemn obligations, and hazard the liberty and happiness of the millions composing this Union, cannot be acknowledged. Such authority is believed to be utterly repugnant both to the principles upon which the general government is constituted, and to the objects which it was expressly formed to attain."

It is not pretended that any clause in the Constitution gives countenance to such a theory. It is altogether founded upon inference not from any language contained in the instrument itself, but from the sovereign character of the several States by which it was ratified. But is it beyond the power of a State, like an individual, to yield a portion of its sovereign rights to secure the remainder? In the language of Mr. Madison, who has been

called the father of the Constitution, "It was formed by the States—that is, by the people in each of the States acting in their highest sovereign capacity, and formed consequently by the same authority which formed the State constitutions." "Nor is the government of the United States, created by the Constitution, less a government, in the strict sense of the term, within the sphere of its powers, than the governments created by the constitutions of the States are within their several spheres. It is, like them, organized into legislative, executive, and judiciary departments. It operates, like them, directly on persons and things; and, like them, it has at command a physical force for executing the powers committed to it."

It was intended to be perpetual, and not to be annulled at the pleasure of any one of the contracting parties. The old articles of confederation were entitled "Articles of confederation and perpetual union between the States;" and by the thirteenth article it is expressly declared that "the articles of this confederation shall be inviolably observed by every State, and the union shall be perpetual." The preamble to the Constitution of the United States, having express reference to the articles of confederation, recites that it was established "in order to form a more perfect union." And yet it is contended that this "more perfect union" does not include the essential attribute of perpetuity.

But that the union was designed to be perpetual appears conclusively from the nature and extent of the powers conferred by the Constitution on the federal government. These powers embrace the very highest attributes of national sovereignty. They place both the sword and the purse under its control. Congress has power to make war and to make peace; to raise and support armies and navies, and to conclude treaties with foreign governments. It is invested with the power to coin money, and to regulate the value thereof, and to regulate commerce with foreign nations and among the several States. It is not necessary to enumerate the other high powers which have been conferred upon the federal government. In order to carry the enumerated powers into effect, Congress possesses the exclusive right to lay and collect duties on imports, and, in common with the States, to lay and collect all other taxes.

But the Constitution has not only conferred these high powers upon Congress, but it has adopted effectual means to

restrain the States from interfering with their exercise. For that purpose it has in strong prohibitory language expressly declared that "no State shall enter into any treaty, alliance, or confederation; grant letters of marque and reprisal; coin money; emit bills of credit; make anything but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts; pass any bill of attainder, *ex post facto* law, or law impairing the obligation of contracts." Moreover, "without the consent of Congress no State shall lay any imposts or duties on any imports or exports, except what may be absolutely necessary for executing its inspection laws," and if they exceed this amount, the excess shall belong to the United States. And "no State shall, without the consent of Congress, lay any duty of tonnage, keep troops or ships of war in time of peace, enter into any agreement or compact with another State, or with a foreign Power, or engage in war, unless actually invaded or in such imminent danger as will not admit of delay."

In order still further to secure the uninterrupted exercise of these high powers against State interposition, it is provided "that this Constitution and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof, and all treaties made or which shall be made under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land; and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, anything in the constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding."

The solemn sanction of religion has been superadded to the obligations of official duty, and all senators and representatives of the United States, all members of State legislatures, and all executive and judicial officers, "both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by oath or affirmation to support this Constitution."

In order to carry into effect these powers, the Constitution has established a perfect government in all its forms, legislative, executive, and judicial; and this government to the extent of its powers acts directly upon the individual citizens of every State, and executes its own decrees by the agency of its own officers. In this respect it differs entirely from the government under the old confederation, which was confined to making requisitions on the States in their sovereign character. This left it in the discretion of each whether to obey or to refuse, and they often declined to comply with such requisitions. It thus became neces-

sary for the purpose of removing this barrier, and "in order to form a more perfect union," to establish a government which could act directly upon the people and execute its own laws without the intermediate agency of the States. This has been accomplished by the Constitution of the United States. In short, the government created by the Constitution, and deriving its authority from the sovereign people of each of the several States, has precisely the same right to exercise its power over the people of all these States in the enumerated cases, that each one of them possesses over subjects not delegated to the United States, but "reserved to the States respectively or to the people."

To the extent of the delegated powers the Constitution of the United States is as much a part of the constitution of each State, and is as binding upon its people, as though it had been textually inserted therein.

This government therefore is a great and powerful government, invested with all the attributes of sovereignty over the special subjects to which its authority extends. Its framers never intended to implant in its bosom the seeds of its own destruction, nor were they at its creation guilty of the absurdity of providing for its own dissolution. It was not intended by its framers to be the baseless fabric of a vision, which, at the touch of the enchanter, would vanish into thin air, but a substantial and mighty fabric, capable of resisting the slow decay of time, and of defying the storms of ages. Indeed, well may the jealous patriots of that day have indulged fears that a government of such high powers might violate the reserved rights of the States, and wisely did they adopt the rule of a strict construction of these powers to prevent the danger. But they did not fear, nor had they any reason to imagine that the Constitution would ever be so interpreted as to enable any State by her own act, and without the consent of her sister States, to discharge her people from all or any of their federal obligations.

It may be asked, then, are the people of the States without redress against the tyranny and oppression of the federal government? By no means. The right of resistance on the part of the governed against the oppression of their governments cannot be denied. It exists independently of all constitutions, and has been exercised at all periods of the world's history. Under it, old governments have been destroyed and new ones have taken their place. It is embodied in strong and express



language in our own Declaration of Independence. But the distinction must ever be observed that this is revolution against an established government, and not a voluntary secession from it by virtue of an inherent constitutional right. In short, let us look the danger fairly in the face: secession is neither more nor less than revolution. It may or it may not be a justifiable revolution; but still it is revolution.

What, in the mean time, is the responsibility and true position of the Executive? He is bound by solemn oath, before God and the country, "to take care that the laws be faithfully executed," and from this obligation he cannot be absolved by any human power. But what if the performance of this duty, in whole or in part, has been rendered impracticable by events over which he could have exercised no control? Such, at the present moment, is the case throughout the State of South Carolina, so far as the laws of the United States to secure the administration of justice by means of the federal judiciary are concerned. All the federal officers within its limits, through whose agency alone these laws can be carried into execution, have already resigned. We no longer have a district judge, a district attorney, or a marshal in South Carolina. In fact, the whole machinery of the federal government necessary for the distribution of remedial justice among the people has been demolished, and it would be difficult, if not impossible, to replace it.

The only acts of Congress on the statute book bearing upon this subject are those of the 28th February, 1795, and 3d March, 1807. These authorize the President, after he shall have ascertained that the marshal, with his *posse comitatus*, is unable to execute civil or criminal process in any particular case, to call forth the militia and employ the army and navy to aid him in performing this service, having first by proclamation commanded the insurgents "to disperse and retire peaceably to their respective abodes within a limited time." This duty cannot by possibility be performed in a State where no judicial authority exists to issue process, and where there is no marshal to execute it, and where, even if there were such an officer, the entire population would constitute one solid combination to resist him.

The bare enumeration of these provisions proves how inadequate they are without further legislation to overcome a united opposition in a single State, not to speak of other States who may place themselves in a similar attitude. Congress alone



has power to decide whether the present laws can or cannot be amended so as to carry out more effectually the objects of the Constitution.

The same insuperable obstacles do not lie in the way of executing the laws for the collection of the customs. The revenue still continues to be collected, as heretofore, at the custom-house in Charleston, and should the collector unfortunately resign a successor may be appointed to perform this duty.

Then, in regard to the property of the United States in South Carolina. This has been purchased for a fair equivalent, "by the consent of the legislature of the State," "for the erection of forts, magazines, arsenals," &c., and over these the authority "to exercise exclusive legislation" has been expressly granted by the Constitution to Congress. It is not believed that any attempt will be made to expel the United States from this property by force; but if in this I should prove to be mistaken, the officer in command of the forts has received orders to act strictly on the defensive. In such a contingency the responsibility for consequences would rightfully rest upon the heads of the assailants.

Apart from the execution of the laws, so far as this may be practicable, the Executive has no authority to decide what shall be the relations between the federal government and South Carolina. He has been invested with no such discretion. He possesses no power to change the relations heretofore existing between them, much less to acknowledge the independence of that State. This would be to invest a mere executive officer with the power of recognizing the dissolution of the Confederacy among our thirty-three sovereign States. It bears no resemblance to the recognition of a foreign *de facto* government, involving no such responsibility. Any attempt to do this would, on his part, be a naked act of usurpation. It is, therefore, my duty to submit to Congress the whole question in all its bearings. The course of events is so rapidly hastening forward that the emergency may soon arise when you may be called upon to decide the momentous question whether you possess the power, by force of arms, to compel a State to remain in the Union. I should feel myself recreant to my duty were I not to express an opinion on this important subject.

The question fairly stated is: Has the Constitution delegated to Congress the power to coerce a State into submission

which is attempting to withdraw or has actually withdrawn from the Confederacy? If answered in the affirmative, it must be on the principle that the power has been conferred upon Congress to declare and to make war against a State. After much serious reflection, I have arrived at the conclusion that no such power has been delegated to Congress or to any other department of the federal government. It is manifest, upon an inspection of the Constitution, that this is not among the specific and enumerated powers granted to Congress; and it is equally apparent that its exercise is not "necessary and proper for carrying into execution" any one of these powers. So far from this power having been delegated to Congress, it was expressly refused by the convention which framed the Constitution.

It appears from the proceedings of that body that on the 31st May, 1787, the clause "*authorizing an exertion of the force of the whole against a delinquent State*" came up for consideration. Mr. Madison opposed it in a brief, but powerful speech, from which I shall extract but a single sentence. He observed: "The use of force against a State would look more like a declaration of war than an infliction of punishment, and would probably be considered by the party attacked as a dissolution of all previous compacts by which it might be bound." Upon his motion the clause was unanimously postponed, and was never, I believe, again presented. Soon afterwards, on the 8th June, 1787, when incidentally adverting to the subject, he said: "Any government for the United States, formed on the supposed practicability of using force against the unconstitutional proceedings of the States, would prove as visionary and fallacious as the government of Congress," evidently meaning the then existing Congress of the old confederation.

Without descending to particulars, it may be safely asserted that the power to make war against a State is at variance with the whole spirit and intent of the Constitution. Suppose such a war should result in the conquest of a State: how are we to govern it afterwards? Shall we hold it as a province and govern it by despotic power? In the nature of things, we could not, by physical force, control the will of the people and compel them to elect senators and representatives to Congress, and to perform all the other duties depending upon their own volition and required from the free citizens of a free State as a constituent member of the Confederacy.

But, if we possessed this power, would it be wise to exercise it under existing circumstances? The object would doubtless be to preserve the Union. War would not only present the most effectual means of destroying it, but would banish all hope of its peaceable reconstruction. Besides, in the fraternal conflict a vast amount of blood and treasure would be expended, rendering future reconciliation between the States impossible. In the mean time, who can foretell what would be the sufferings and privations of the people during its existence?

The fact is, that our Union rests upon public opinion, and can never be cemented by the blood of its citizens shed in civil war. If it cannot live in the affections of the people it must one day perish. Congress possesses many means of preserving it by conciliation; but the sword was not placed in their hand to preserve it by force.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis, in his *Life of Buchanan*, II. 319, gives certain questions as having been propounded by President Buchanan to Judge J. S. Black, Attorney General, for an opinion, November 17, 1860. Among the Buchanan Papers of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in a box labelled "Buchanan Papers—Nahum Capen, Black, & Brewster," there is a paper in Judge Black's handwriting, bearing the following endorsement by President Buchanan, with his own hand: "17 Nov: 1860. The form in which Judge Black desired I might propound the questions to him for his opinion." The paper reads as follows:

"17 Nov. 1860.

"SIR,

"The excitement in the Southern States caused by the recent presidential election and by the previous expressions in the North of hostility to Southern people and their domestic institutions may produce in some places resistance to the laws of the Union. As I desire to be guided in this emergency solely by the Constitution, and as there are several important points obscure enough to need some exposition, I have to require your opinion in writing on the following questions:

"1. In case of a conflict between the authorities of any State and those of the United States, can there be any doubt that the laws of the Federal Government, if constitutionally passed, are supreme?

"2. What is the extent of my official power to collect the duties on imports at a port where the revenue laws are resisted by a force which drives the collector from the custom house?

"3. What right have I to defend the public property (for instance, a fort, arsenal and navy yard), in case it should be assaulted?

"4. What are the legal means at my disposal for executing those laws of the United States which are usually administered through the courts and their officers?

"5. Can a military force be used for any purpose whatever under the

But may I be permitted solemnly to invoke my countrymen to pause and deliberate, before they determine to destroy this, the grandest temple which has ever been dedicated to human freedom since the world began. It has been consecrated by the blood of our fathers, by the glories of the past, and by the hopes of the future. The Union has already made us the most prosperous, and ere long will, if preserved, render us the most powerful nation on the face of the earth. In every foreign region of the globe the title of American citizen is held in the highest respect, and when pronounced in a foreign land it causes the hearts of our countrymen to swell with honest pride. Surely, when we reach the brink of the yawning abyss we shall recoil with horror from the last fatal plunge.

By such a dread catastrophe, the hopes of the friends of freedom throughout the world would be destroyed, and a long

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Acts of 1795 and 1807, within the limits of a State where there are no judges, marshal or other civil officers?

"I will thank you to give this subject your early attention and let me have your opinion without loss of time."

Judge Black's opinion bears date November 20, 1860. It is printed in 9 Opinions of the Attorneys General, 517-526. Curtis also gives it in his Life of Buchanan, II. 319-324. In his opinion Judge Black maintains that "within their respective spheres of action, the Federal Government and the government of a State are both of them independent and supreme, but each is powerless beyond the limits assigned to it by the Constitution;" that the power of the President as commander-in-chief of the army "is to be used only in the manner prescribed by the legislative department;" that while some Acts of Congress give the President wide discretion as to the means, yet "where the mode of performing a duty is pointed out by statute, that is the exclusive mode, and no other can be followed;" that Congress had established a certain mode for the collection of duties, and that if the machinery so established became broken up, this "would not be a legal reason for substituting a different kind of machinery in its place;" that the functions of a collector of customs, within a certain district, were not however required by law to be performed at the custom-house or any other particular spot, but might if necessary be performed on a vessel inside of an established port of entry; that the President might take such measures as seemed to him necessary for the protection of the public property, such as forts, arsenals, magazines, dockyards, custom-houses, and public ships, and might, as an act of defence, recapture any such property unlawfully taken by another; that by the act of 1795 the President was authorized to call forth the militia "whenever the laws of the United States shall be opposed or the execution thereof obstructed in any State by combinations too powerful to be suppressed by the ordinary course of judicial proceedings, or by the power vested in the marshals," while by the act of 1807 he was empowered to

night of leaden despotism would enshroud the nations. Our example for more than eighty years would not only be lost, but it would be quoted as a conclusive proof that man is unfit for self-government.

It is not every wrong—nay, it is not every grievous wrong—which can justify a resort to such a fearful alternative. This ought to be the last desperate remedy of a despairing people, after every other constitutional means of conciliation had been exhausted. We should reflect that, under this free government, there is an incessant ebb and flow in public opinion. The slavery question, like everything human, will have its day. I firmly believe that it has reached and passed the culminating point. But if, in the midst of the existing excitement, the Union shall perish, the evil may then become irreparable.

Congress can contribute much to avert it, by proposing and recommending to the legislatures of the several States the

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employ such parts of the land and naval forces as he might judge necessary for the purpose of causing the laws to be duly executed, in all cases where it was lawful to use the militia for the same purpose; that there was thus imposed on the President the "sole responsibility of deciding whether the exigency has arisen which requires the use of military force," and that "in proportion to the magnitude of that responsibility will be his care not to overstep the limits of his legal and just authority;" that the laws referred to in the act of 1795 were "manifestly those which are administered by the judges and executed by the ministerial officers of the courts;" that "the ordinary means provided for the execution of the laws" "must continue to be used until their incapacity to cope with the power opposed to them shall be plainly demonstrated;" that only clear evidence to that effect would justify the use of military force, and "even then its operations must be purely defensive;" that the military power could "do no more than might and ought to be done by a civil posse, if a civil posse could be raised large enough to meet the same opposition," and "must be kept in strict subordination to the civil authority, since it is only in aid of the latter that the former can act at all;" that if the feeling in any State against the United States became so universal that the Federal officers resigned and none would take their places, so that there were "no courts to issue judicial process, and no ministerial officers to execute it," then "troops would certainly be out of place, and their use wholly illegal;" that if one of the States "should declare her independence," the President could not recognize her independence or absolve her from her Federal obligations, but could only go on and execute the laws to the extent of the "defensive means" placed in his hands; that whether Congress had "the constitutional right to make war against one or more States" was for Congress to consider; that no such power was expressly given, nor were there any words which implied it; that there "was undoubtedly a strong and universal conviction among the men who framed and



remedy for existing evils which the Constitution has itself provided for its own preservation. This has been tried at different critical periods of our history, and always with eminent success. It is to be found in the fifth article, providing for its own amendment. Under this article amendments have been proposed by two thirds of both houses of Congress, and have been "ratified by the legislatures of three fourths of the several States," and have consequently become parts of the Constitution. To this process the country is indebted for the clause prohibiting Congress from passing any law respecting an establishment of religion, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or of the right of petition. To this we are, also, indebted for the Bill of Rights, which secures the people against any abuse of power by the federal government. Such were the apprehensions justly entertained by the friends of State rights at that period

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ratified the Constitution that military force would not only be useless but pernicious as a means of holding the States together." In conclusion, Judge Black said:

"If it be true that war cannot be declared, nor a system of general hostilities carried on by the Central Government against a State, then it seems to follow that an attempt to do so would be *ipso facto* an expulsion of such State from the Union. Being treated as an alien and an enemy, she would be compelled to act accordingly. And if Congress shall break up the present Union by unconstitutionally putting strife and enmity and armed hostility between different sections of the country, instead of the domestic tranquillity which the Constitution was meant to insure, will not all the States be absolved from their Federal obligations? Is any portion of the people bound to contribute their money or their blood to carry on a contest like that?

"The right of the General Government to preserve itself in its whole constitutional vigor by repelling a direct and positive aggression upon its property or its officers cannot be denied. But this is a totally different thing from an offensive war to punish the people for the political misdeeds of their State government, or to enforce an acknowledgment that the Government of the United States is supreme. The States are colleagues of one another, and if some of them shall conquer the rest, and hold them as subjugated provinces, it would totally destroy the whole theory upon which they are now connected.

"If this view of the subject be correct, as I think it is, then the Union must utterly perish at the moment when Congress shall arm one part of the people against another for any purpose beyond that of merely protecting the General Government in the exercise of its proper constitutional functions."

See Dunning's Essays on the Civil War and Reconstruction, 3-5; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 351.



as to have rendered it extremely doubtful whether the Constitution could have long survived without those amendments.

Again, the Constitution was amended by the same process, after the election of President Jefferson by the House of Representatives, in February, 1803. This amendment was rendered necessary to prevent a recurrence of the dangers, which had seriously threatened the existence of the government during the pendency of that election. The article for its own amendment was intended to secure the amicable adjustment of conflicting constitutional questions like the present which might arise between the governments of the States and that of the United States. This appears from contemporaneous history. In this connection, I shall merely call attention to a few sentences in Mr. Madison's justly celebrated report, in 1799, to the legislature of Virginia. In this, he ably and conclusively defended the resolutions of the preceding legislature, against the strictures of several other State legislatures. These were mainly founded upon the protest of the Virginia legislature against the "alien and sedition acts," as "palpable and alarming infractions of the Constitution." In pointing out the peaceful and constitutional remedies—and he referred to none other—to which the States were authorized to resort on such occasions, he concludes by saying, "that the legislatures of the States might have made a direct representation to Congress, with a view to obtain a rescinding of the two offensive acts, or they might have represented to their respective senators in Congress, their wish that two thirds thereof would propose an explanatory amendment to the Constitution, or two thirds of themselves, if such had been their option, might by an application to Congress, have obtained a convention for the same object." This is the very course which I earnestly recommend, in order to obtain an "explanatory amendment" of the Constitution on the subject of slavery. This might originate with Congress or the State legislatures, as may be deemed most advisable to attain the object.

The explanatory amendment might be confined to the final settlement of the true construction of the Constitution on three special points:

1. An express recognition of the right of property in slaves in the States where it now exists or may hereafter exist.
2. The duty of protecting this right in all the common Territories throughout their territorial existence, and until they

shall be admitted as States into the Union, with or without slavery, as their constitutions may prescribe.

3. A like recognition of the right of the master to have his slave, who has escaped from one State to another, restored and "delivered up" to him, and of the validity of the fugitive slave law enacted for this purpose, together with a declaration that all State laws impairing or defeating this right, are violations of the Constitution, and are consequently null and void. It may be objected that this construction of the Constitution has already been settled by the Supreme Court of the United States, and what more ought to be required? The answer is, that a very large proportion of the people of the United States still contest the correctness of this decision, and never will cease from agitation and admit its binding force until clearly established by the people of the several States in their sovereign character. Such an explanatory amendment, would, it is believed, forever terminate the existing dissensions, and restore peace and harmony among the States.

It ought not to be doubted that such an appeal to the arbitrament established by the Constitution itself would be received with favor by all the States of the Confederacy. In any event, it ought to be tried in a spirit of conciliation before any of these States shall separate themselves from the Union.

When I entered upon the duties of the presidential office the aspect neither of our foreign nor domestic affairs was at all satisfactory. We were involved in dangerous complications with several nations, and two of our Territories were in a state of revolution against the government. A restoration of the African slave trade had numerous and powerful advocates. Unlawful military expeditions were countenanced by many of our citizens, and were suffered, in defiance of the efforts of the government, to escape from our shores for the purpose of making war upon the unoffending people of neighboring republics with whom we were at peace. In addition to these and other difficulties, we experienced a revulsion in monetary affairs, soon after my advent to power, of unexampled severity, and of ruinous consequences to all the great interests of the country. When we take a retrospect of what was then our condition, and contrast this with its material prosperity at the time of the late presidential election, we have abundant reason to return our grateful thanks

to that merciful Providence which has never forsaken us as a nation in all our past trials.

Our relations with Great Britain are of the most friendly character. Since the commencement of my administration the two dangerous questions arising from the Clayton and Bulwer treaty, and from the right of search claimed by the British government, have been amicably and honorably adjusted.

The discordant constructions of the Clayton and Bulwer treaty between the two governments, which at different periods of the discussion bore a threatening aspect, have resulted in a final settlement entirely satisfactory to this government. In my last annual message I informed Congress that the British government had not then "completed treaty arrangements with the Republics of Honduras and Nicaragua in pursuance of the understanding between the two governments. It is, nevertheless, confidently expected that this good work will ere long be accomplished." This confident expectation has since been fulfilled. Her Britannic Majesty concluded a treaty with Honduras on the 28th November, 1859, and with Nicaragua on the 28th August, 1860, relinquishing the Mosquito protectorate. Besides, by the former, the Bay Islands are recognized as a part of the Republic of Honduras. It may be observed that the stipulations of these treaties conform in every important particular to the amendments adopted by the Senate of the United States to the treaty concluded at London on the 17th October, 1856, between the two governments. It will be recollected that this treaty was rejected by the British government, because of its objection to the just and important amendment of the Senate to the article relating to Ruatan and the other islands in the bay of Honduras.

It must be a source of sincere satisfaction to all classes of our fellow citizens, and especially to those engaged in foreign commerce, that the claim on the part of Great Britain forcibly to visit and search American merchant vessels on the high seas in time of peace, has been abandoned. This was, by far, the most dangerous question to the peace of the two countries which had existed since the war of 1812. Whilst it remained open, they might at any moment have been precipitated into a war. This was rendered manifest by the exasperated state of public feeling throughout our entire country, produced by the forcible search of American merchant vessels by British cruisers on the coast of Cuba, in the spring of 1858. The American people hailed

with general acclaim the orders of the Secretary of the Navy to our naval force in the Gulf of Mexico "to protect all vessels of the United States on the high seas from search or detention by the vessels of war of any other nation." These orders might have produced an immediate collision between the naval forces of the two countries. This was most fortunately prevented by an appeal to the justice of Great Britain, and to the law of nations as expounded by her own most eminent jurists.

The only question of any importance which still remains open, is the disputed title between the two governments to the Island of San Juan, in the vicinity of Washington Territory. As this question is still under negotiation, it is not deemed advisable at the present moment to make any other allusion to the subject.

The recent visit of the Prince of Wales, in a private character, to the people of this country, has proved to be a most auspicious event. In its consequences, it cannot fail to increase the kindred and kindly feelings which I trust may ever actuate the government and people of both countries in their political and social intercourse with each other.

With France, our ancient and powerful ally, our relations continue to be of the most friendly character. A decision has recently been made by a French judicial tribunal, with the approbation of the Imperial government, which cannot fail to foster the sentiments of mutual regard that have so long existed between the two countries. Under the French law, no person can serve in the armies of France, unless he be a French citizen. The law of France recognizing the natural right of expatriation, it follows as a necessary consequence, that a Frenchman by the fact of having become a citizen of the United States has changed his allegiance, and has lost his native character. He cannot therefore be compelled to serve in the French armies, in case he should return to his native country. These principles were announced in 1852 by the French Minister of War, and in two late cases have been confirmed by the French judiciary. In these, two natives of France have been discharged from the French army, because they had become American citizens. To employ the language of our present minister to France, who has rendered good service on this occasion: "I do not think our French naturalized fellow-citizens will hereafter experience much annoyance on this subject." I venture to predict that the time is

not far distant when the other continental powers will adopt the same wise and just policy which has done so much honor to the enlightened government of the Emperor. In any event, our government is bound to protect the rights of our naturalized citizens everywhere, to the same extent as though they had drawn their first breath in this country. We can recognize no distinction between our native and naturalized citizens.

Between the great empire of Russia and the United States, the mutual friendship and regard which has so long existed still continues to prevail, and if possible to increase. Indeed our relations with that empire are all that we could desire. Our relations with Spain are now of a more complicated though less dangerous character than they have been for many years. Our citizens have long held and continue to hold numerous claims against the Spanish government. These had been ably urged for a series of years by our successive diplomatic representatives at Madrid, but without obtaining redress. The Spanish government finally agreed to institute a joint commission for the adjustment of these claims, and on the 5th day of March, 1860, concluded a convention for this purpose with our present minister at Madrid.

Under this convention, what have been denominated the "Cuban claims," amounting to \$128,635.54, in which more than one hundred of our fellow-citizens are interested, were recognized; and the Spanish government agreed to pay \$100,000 of this amount "within three months following the exchange of ratifications." The payment of the remaining \$28,635.54 was to await the decision of the commissioners for or against the "Amistad claim;" but in any event the balance was to be paid to the claimants either by Spain or the United States. These terms, I have every reason to know, are highly satisfactory to the holders of the Cuban claims. Indeed, they have made a formal offer, authorizing the State Department to settle these claims, and to deduct the amount of the Amistad claim from the sums which they are entitled to receive from Spain. This offer, of course, cannot be accepted. All other claims of citizens of the United States against Spain, or of subjects of the Queen of Spain against the United States, including the "Amistad claim," were by this convention referred to a board of commissioners in the usual form. Neither the validity of the Amistad claim, nor of any other claim against either party, with the single exception of the Cuban claims, was recognized by the con-



vention. Indeed, the Spanish government did not insist that the validity of the Amistad claim should be thus recognized, notwithstanding its payment had been recommended to Congress by two of my predecessors, as well as by myself, and an appropriation for that purpose had passed the Senate of the United States.

They were content that it should be submitted to the board for examination and decision like the other claims. Both governments were bound respectively to pay the amounts awarded to the several claimants "at such times and places as may be fixed by and according to the tenor of said awards."

I transmitted this convention to the Senate for their constitutional action on the 3d of May, 1860, and on the 27th of the succeeding June they determined that they would "not advise and consent" to its ratification.

These proceedings place our relations with Spain in an awkward and embarrassing position. It is more than probable that the final adjustment of these claims will devolve upon my successor.

I reiterate the recommendation contained in my annual message of December, 1858, and repeated in that of December, 1859, in favor of the acquisition of Cuba from Spain by fair purchase. I firmly believe that such an acquisition would contribute essentially to the well-being and prosperity of both countries in all future time as well as prove the certain means of immediately abolishing the African slave trade throughout the world. I would not repeat this recommendation upon the present occasion if I believed that the transfer of Cuba to the United States, upon conditions highly favorable to Spain, could justly tarnish the national honor of the proud and ancient Spanish monarchy. Surely no person ever attributed to the First Napoleon a disregard of the national honor of France for transferring Louisiana to the United States for a fair equivalent, both in money and commercial advantages.

With the Emperor of Austria and the remaining continental powers of Europe, including that of the Sultan, our relations continue to be of the most friendly character.

The friendly and peaceful policy pursued by the government of the United States towards the empire of China has produced the most satisfactory results. The treaty of Tientsin of the 18th June, 1858, has been faithfully observed by the Chinese authorities. The convention of the 8th November, 1858, supplementary



to this treaty for the adjustment and satisfaction of the claims of our citizens on China, referred to in my last annual message, has been already carried into effect, so far as this was practicable. Under this convention the sum of 500,000 taels, equal to about \$700,000, was stipulated to be paid in satisfaction of the claims of American citizens out of the one fifth of the receipts for tonnage, import, and export duties on American vessels at the ports of Canton, Shanghai, Fuchau; and it was "agreed that this amount shall be in full liquidation of all claims of American citizens at the various ports to this date." Debentures for this amount, to wit: 300,00 taels for Canton, 100,000 for Shanghai, and 100,000 for Fuchau, were delivered, according to the terms of the convention, by the respective Chinese collectors of the customs of these ports to the agent selected by our minister to receive the same. Since that time the claims of our citizens have been adjusted by the board of commissioners appointed for that purpose under the act of March 3, 1859, and their awards, which proved satisfactory to the claimants, have been approved by our minister. In the aggregate they amount to the sum of \$498,694.78. The claimants have already received a large proportion of the sums awarded to them out of the fund provided, and it is confidently expected that the remainder will, ere long, be entirely paid. After the awards shall have been satisfied, there will remain a surplus of more than \$200,000 at the disposition of Congress. As this will in equity belong to the Chinese government, would not justice require its appropriation to some benevolent object in which the Chinese may be specially interested?

Our minister to China, in obedience to his instructions, has remained perfectly neutral in the war between Great Britain and France and the Chinese empire, although, in conjunction with the Russian minister, he was ever ready and willing, had the opportunity offered, to employ his good offices in restoring peace between the parties. It is but an act of simple justice, both to our present minister and his predecessor, to state that they have proved fully equal to the delicate, trying, and responsible positions in which they have on different occasions been placed.

The ratifications of the treaty with Japan, concluded at Yeddo on the 29th July, 1858, were exchanged at Washington on the 22d May last, and the treaty itself was proclaimed on the succeeding day. There is good reason to expect that, under its

protection and influence, our trade and intercourse with that distant and interesting people will rapidly increase.

The ratifications of the treaty were exchanged with unusual solemnity. For this purpose the Tycoon had accredited three of his most distinguished subjects as envoys extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary, who were received and treated with marked distinction and kindness, both by the government and people of the United States. There is every reason to believe that they have returned to their native land entirely satisfied with their visit, and inspired by the most friendly feelings for our country. Let us ardently hope, in the language of the treaty itself, that "there shall henceforward be perpetual peace and friendship between the United States of America and his Majesty the Tycoon of Japan and his successors."

With the wise, conservative, and liberal government of the empire of Brazil our relations continue to be of the most amicable character.

The exchange of the ratifications of the convention with the republic of New Granada, signed at Washington on the 10th September, 1857, has been long delayed from accidental causes, for which neither party is censurable. These ratifications were duly exchanged in this city on the 5th of November last. Thus has a controversy been amicably terminated, which had become so serious at the period of my inauguration, as to require me, on the 17th April, 1857, to direct our minister to demand his passports and return to the United States.

Under this convention the government of New Granada has specially acknowledged itself to be responsible to our citizens "for damages which were caused by the riot at Panama on the 15th April, 1856." These claims, together with other claims of our citizens which had been long urged in vain, are referred for adjustment to a board of commissioners. I submit a copy of the convention to Congress, and recommend the legislation necessary to carry it into effect.

Persevering efforts have been made for the adjustment of the claims of American citizens against the government of Costa Rica, and I am happy to inform you that these have finally prevailed. A convention was signed at the city of San José on the 2d July last, between the minister resident of the United States in Costa Rica and the plenipotentiaries of that republic, referring these claims to a board of commissioners, and providing for the

payment of their awards. This convention will be submitted immediately to the Senate for their constitutional action.

The claims of our citizens upon the republic of Nicaragua have not yet been provided for by treaty, although diligent efforts for this purpose have been made by our minister resident to that republic. These are still continued with a fair prospect of success.

Our relations with Mexico remain in a most unsatisfactory condition. In my last two annual messages I discussed extensively the subject of these relations, and do not now propose to repeat at length the facts and arguments then presented. They proved conclusively that our citizens residing in Mexico, and our merchants trading thereto, had suffered a series of wrongs and outrages such as we have never patiently borne from any other nation. For these our successive ministers, invoking the faith of treaties, had, in the name of their country, persistently demanded redress and indemnification, but without the slightest effect. Indeed, so confident had the Mexican authorities become of our patient endurance, that they universally believed they might commit these outrages upon American citizens with absolute impunity. Thus wrote our minister in 1856, and expressed the opinion, that "nothing but a manifestation of the power of the government and of its purpose to punish these wrongs will avail."

Afterward, in 1857, came the adoption of a new constitution for Mexico, the election of a president and congress under its provisions, and the inauguration of the president. Within one short month, however, this president was expelled from the capital by a rebellion in the army and the supreme power of the republic was assigned to General Zuloaga. This usurper was, in his turn, soon compelled to retire, and give place to General Miramon.

Under the constitution which had thus been adopted, Señor Juarez, as chief justice of the supreme court, became the lawful president of the republic; and it was for the maintenance of the constitution and his authority derived from it, that the civil war commenced, and still continues to be prosecuted.

Throughout the year 1858, the constitutional party grew stronger and stronger. In the previous history of Mexico, a successful military revolution at the capital had almost universally been the signal for submission throughout the republic.

Not so on the present occasion. A majority of the citizens persistently sustained the constitutional government. When this was recognized in April, 1859, by the government of the United States, its authority extended over a large majority of the Mexican States and people, including Vera Cruz, and all the other important sea-ports of the republic. From that period our commerce with Mexico began to revive, and the constitutional government has afforded it all the protection in its power.

Meanwhile, the government of Miramon still held sway at the capital and over the surrounding country, and continued its outrages against the few American citizens who still had the courage to remain within its power. To cap the climax, after the battle of Tacubaya in April, 1859, General Marquez ordered three citizens of the United States, two of them physicians, to be seized in the hospital at that place, taken out and shot, without crime, and without trial. This was done, notwithstanding our unfortunate countrymen were at the moment engaged in the holy cause of affording relief to the soldiers of both parties who had been wounded in the battle, without making any distinction between them.

The time had arrived, in my opinion, when this government was bound to exert its power to avenge and redress the wrongs of our citizens, and to afford them protection in Mexico. The interposing obstacle was that the portion of the country under the sway of Miramon could not be reached without passing over territory under the jurisdiction of the constitutional government. Under these circumstances, I deemed it my duty to recommend to Congress, in my last annual message, the employment of a sufficient military force to penetrate into the interior, where the government of Miramon was to be found, with, or if need be, without the consent of the Juarez government, though it was not doubted that this consent could be obtained. Never have I had a clearer conviction on any subject than of the justice, as well as wisdom, of such a policy. No other alternative was left, except the entire abandonment of our fellow-citizens who had gone to Mexico under the faith of treaties to the systematic injustice, cruelty, and oppression of Miramon's government. Besides, it is almost certain that the simple authority to employ this force would of itself have accomplished all our objects, without striking a single blow. The constitutional government would, then, ere

this have been established at the city of Mexico, and would have been ready and willing, to the extent of its ability, to do us justice.

In addition, and I deem this a most important consideration, European governments would have been deprived of all pretext to interfere in the territorial and domestic concerns of Mexico. We should thus have been relieved from the obligation of resisting, even by force, should this become necessary, any attempt by these governments to deprive our neighboring republic of portions of her territory, a duty from which we could not shrink without abandoning the traditional and established policy of the American people. I am happy to observe that, firmly relying upon the justice and good faith of these governments, there is no present danger that such a contingency will happen.

Having discovered that my recommendations would not be sustained by Congress, the next alternative was to accomplish, in some degree, if possible, the same objects by treaty stipulations with the constitutional government. Such treaties were accordingly concluded by our late able and excellent minister to Mexico, and on the 4th of January last were submitted to the Senate for ratification. As these have not yet received the final action of that body, it would be improper for me to present a detailed statement of their provisions. Still, I may be permitted to express the opinion in advance, that they are calculated to promote the agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial interests of the country, and to secure our just influence with an adjoining republic as to whose fortunes and fate we can never feel indifferent; whilst at the same time they provide for the payment of a considerable amount towards the satisfaction of the claims of our injured fellow-citizens.

At the period of my inauguration I was confronted in Kansas by a revolutionary government existing under what is called the "Topeka Constitution." Its avowed object was to subdue the territorial government by force, and to inaugurate what was called the "Topeka Government" in its stead. To accomplish this object an extensive military organization was formed, and its command intrusted to the most violent revolutionary leaders. Under these circumstances it became my imperative duty to exert the whole constitutional power of the Executive to prevent the flames of civil war from again raging in Kansas; which, in the excited state of the public mind, both North and South, might have extended into the neighboring States. The hostile



parties in Kansas had been inflamed against each other, by emissaries both from the North and the South, to a degree of malignity without parallel in our history. To prevent actual collision, and to assist the civil magistrates in enforcing the laws, a strong detachment of the army was stationed in the Territory, ready to aid the marshal and his deputies when lawfully called upon as a *posse comitatus* in the execution of civil and criminal process. Still the troubles in Kansas could not have been permanently settled without an election by the people.

The ballot-box is the surest arbiter of disputes among free-men. Under this conviction every proper effort was employed to induce the hostile parties to vote at the election of delegates to frame a State constitution, and afterwards at the election to decide whether Kansas should be a slave or free State.

The insurgent party refused to vote at either, lest this might be considered a recognition on their part of the territorial government established by Congress. A better spirit, however, seemed soon after to prevail, and the two parties met face to face at the third election, held on the first Monday of January, 1858, for members of the legislature and State officers under the Lecompton constitution. The result was the triumph of the anti-slavery party at the polls. This decision of the ballot-box proved clearly that this party were in the majority, and removed the danger of civil war. From that time we have heard little or nothing of the Topeka government, and all serious danger of revolutionary troubles in Kansas was then at an end.

This Lecompton constitution which had been thus recognized at this State election, by the votes of both political parties in Kansas, was transmitted to me with the request that I should present it to Congress. This I could not have refused to do without violating my clearest and strongest convictions of duty. The constitution and all the proceedings which preceded and followed its formation, were fair and regular on their face. I then believed, and experience has proved, that the interests of the people of Kansas would have been best consulted by its admission as a State into the Union, especially as the majority, within a brief period, could have amended the constitution according to their will and pleasure. If fraud existed in all or any of these proceedings, it was not for the President but for Congress to investigate and determine the question of fraud, and what ought to be its consequences. If at the first two elections



the majority refused to vote, it cannot be pretended that this refusal to exercise the elective franchise could invalidate an election fairly held under lawful authority, even if they had not subsequently voted at the third election. It is true that the whole constitution had not been submitted to the people as I always desired; but the precedents are numerous of the admission of States into the Union without such submission. It would not comport with my present purpose to review the proceedings of Congress upon the Lecompton constitution. It is sufficient to observe that their final action has removed the last vestige of serious revolutionary troubles. The desperate band recently assembled under a notorious outlaw in the southern portion of the Territory, to resist the execution of the laws, and to plunder peaceful citizens, will, I doubt not, be speedily subdued and brought to justice.

Had I treated the Lecompton constitution as a nullity and refused to transmit it to Congress, it is not difficult to imagine, whilst recalling the position of the country at that moment, what would have been the disastrous consequences, both in and out of the Territory, from such a dereliction of duty on the part of the Executive.

Peace has also been restored within the Territory of Utah, which at the commencement of my administration was in a state of open rebellion. This was the more dangerous, as the people animated by a fanatical spirit and entrenched within their distant mountain fastnesses, might have made a long and formidable resistance. Cost what it might it was necessary to bring them into subjection to the Constitution and the laws. Sound policy, therefore, as well as humanity, required that this object should, if possible, be accomplished without the effusion of blood. This could only be effected by sending a military force into the Territory sufficiently strong to convince the people that resistance would be hopeless, and at the same time to offer them a pardon for past offences on condition of immediate submission to the government. This policy was pursued with eminent success, and the only cause for regret is the heavy expenditure required to march a large detachment of the army to that remote region, and to furnish it subsistence.

Utah is now comparatively peaceful and quiet, and the military force has been withdrawn, except that portion of it neces-

sary to keep the Indians in check, and to protect the emigrant trains on their way to our Pacific possessions.

In my first annual message I promised to employ my best exertions, in coöperation with Congress, to reduce the expenditures of the government within the limits of a wise and judicious economy. An overflowing treasury had produced habits of prodigality and extravagance which could only be gradually corrected. The work required both time and patience. I applied myself diligently to this task from the beginning, and was aided by the able and energetic efforts of the heads of the different executive departments. The result of our labors in this good cause did not appear in the sum total of our expenditures for the first two years, mainly in consequence of the extraordinary expenditure necessarily incurred in the Utah expedition, and the very large amount of the contingent expenses of Congress during this period. These greatly exceeded the pay and mileage of the members. For the year ending June 30, 1858, whilst the pay and mileage amounted to \$1,490,214, the contingent expenses rose to \$2,093,309.79, and for the year ending June 30, 1859, whilst the pay and mileage amounted to \$859,093.66, the contingent expenses amounted to \$1,431,565.78. I am happy, however, to be able to inform you that during the last fiscal year ending June 30, 1860, the total expenditures of the government in all its branches, legislative, executive, and judicial, exclusive of the public debt, were reduced to the sum of \$55,402,465.46. This conclusively appears from the books of the Treasury. In the year ending June 30, 1858, the total expenditure, exclusive of the public debt, amounted to \$71,901,129.77, and that for the year ending June 30, 1859, to \$66,346,226.13. Whilst the books of the Treasury show an actual expenditure of \$59,848,474.72 for the year ending June 30, 1860, including \$1,040,667.71 for the contingent expenses of Congress, there must be deducted from this amount the sum of \$4,296,009.26, with the interest upon it of \$150,000, appropriated by the act of February 15, 1860, "for the purpose of supplying the deficiency in the revenues and defraying the expenses of the Post Office Department for the year ending June 30, 1859." This sum, therefore, justly chargeable to the year 1859, must be deducted from the sum of \$59,848,474.72 in order to ascertain the expenditure for the year ending June 30, 1860, which leaves a balance for the expenditures of that year of \$55,402,465.46. The interest on the public debt,

including treasury notes for the same fiscal year, ending June 30, 1860, amounted to \$3,177,314.62, which, added to the above sum of \$55,402,465.46, makes the aggregate of \$58,579,780.08.

It ought in justice to be observed, that several of the estimates from the departments for the year ending June 30, 1860, were reduced by Congress below what was and still is deemed compatible with the public interest. Allowing a liberal margin of \$2,500,000 for this reduction and for other causes, it may be safely asserted that the sum of \$61,000,000, or, at the most, \$62,000,000, is amply sufficient to administer the government and to pay the interest on the public debt, unless contingent events should hereafter render extraordinary expenditures necessary.

This result has been attained in a considerable degree by the care exercised by the appropriate departments in entering into public contracts. I have myself never interfered with the award of any such contract, except in a single case, with the Colonization Society, deeming it advisable to cast the whole responsibility in each case on the proper head of the department, with the general instruction that these contracts should always be given to the lowest and best bidder. It has ever been my opinion that public contracts are not a legitimate source of patronage, to be conferred upon personal or political favorites; but that, in all such cases, a public officer is bound to act for the government as a prudent individual would act for himself.

It is with great satisfaction I communicate the fact that since the date of my last annual message not a single slave has been imported into the United States in violation of the laws prohibiting the African slave trade. This statement is founded upon a thorough examination and investigation of the subject. Indeed, the spirit which prevailed some time since among a portion of our fellow-citizens in favor of this trade seems to have entirely subsided.

I also congratulate you upon the public sentiment which now exists against the crime of setting on foot military expeditions within the limits of the United States, to proceed from thence and make war upon the people of unoffending States with whom we are at peace. In this respect a happy change has been effected since the commencement of my administration. It surely ought to be the prayer of every Christian and patriot that such expeditions may never again receive countenance in our country, or depart from our shores.

It would be a useless repetition to do more than refer with earnest commendation to my former recommendations in favor of the Pacific railroad; of the grant of power to the President to employ the naval force in the vicinity for the protection of the lives and property of our fellow-citizens passing in transit over the different Central American routes against sudden and lawless outbreaks and depredations; and also to protect American merchant vessels, their crews and cargoes, against violent and unlawful seizure and confiscation in the ports of Mexico and the South American republics, when these may be in a disturbed and revolutionary condition. It is my settled conviction, that without such a power we do not afford that protection to those engaged in the commerce of the country which they have a right to demand.

I again recommend to Congress the passage of a law, in pursuance of the provisions of the Constitution, appointing a day certain previous to the 4th March in each year of an odd number, for the election of representatives throughout all the States. A similar power has already been exercised, with general approbation, in the appointment of the same day throughout the Union for holding the election of electors for President and Vice-President of the United States. My attention was earnestly directed to this subject from the fact that the Thirty-fifth Congress terminated on the 3d March, 1859, without making the necessary appropriation for the service of the Post Office Department. I was then forced to consider the best remedy for this omission, and an immediate call of the present Congress was the natural resort. Upon inquiry, however, I ascertained that fifteen out of the thirty-three States composing the Confederacy were without representatives, and that consequently these fifteen States would be disfranchised by such a call. These fifteen States would be in the same condition on the 4th March next. Ten of them cannot elect representatives, according to existing State laws, until different periods, extending from the beginning of August next until the months of October and November. In my last message I gave warning that in a time of sudden and alarming danger the salvation of our institutions might depend upon the power of the President immediately to assemble a full Congress to meet the emergency.

It is now quite evident that the financial necessities of the government will require a modification of the tariff during your

present session for the purpose of increasing the revenue. In this aspect, I desire to reiterate the recommendation contained in my last two annual messages in favor of imposing specific, instead of *ad valorem*, duties on all imported articles to which these can be properly applied. From long observation and experience, I am convinced that specific duties are necessary, both to protect the revenue and to secure to our manufacturing interests that amount of incidental encouragement which unavoidably results from a revenue tariff.

As an abstract proposition, it may be admitted that *ad valorem* duties would in theory be the most just and equal. But if the experience of this and of all other commercial nations has demonstrated that such duties cannot be assessed and collected without great frauds upon the revenue, then it is the part of wisdom to resort to specific duties. Indeed, from the very nature of an *ad valorem* duty, this must be the result. Under it the inevitable consequence is, that foreign goods will be entered at less than their true value. The Treasury will, therefore, lose the duty on the difference between their real and fictitious value, and to this extent we are defrauded.

The temptations which *ad valorem* duties present to a dishonest importer are irresistible. His object is to pass his goods through the custom-house at the very lowest valuation necessary to save them from confiscation. In this he too often succeeds, in spite of the vigilance of the revenue officers. Hence the resort to false invoices, one for the purchaser and another for the custom-house, and to other expedients to defraud the government. The honest importer produces his invoice to the collector, stating the actual price at which he purchased the articles abroad. Not so the dishonest importer, and the agent of the foreign manufacturer. And here it may be observed that a very large proportion of the manufactures imported from abroad are consigned for sale to commission merchants, who are mere agents employed by the manufacturers. In such cases no actual sale has been made to fix their value. The foreign manufacturer, if he be dishonest, prepares an invoice of the goods, not at their actual value, but at the very lowest rate necessary to escape detection. In this manner the dishonest importer and the foreign manufacturer enjoy a decided advantage over the honest merchant. They are thus enabled to undersell the fair trader, and drive him from the market. In fact, the operation of this system has already



driven from the pursuits of honorable commerce many of that class of regular and conscientious merchants whose character throughout the world is the pride of our country.

The remedy for these evils is to be found in specific duties, so far as this may be practicable. They dispense with any inquiry at the custom-house into the actual cost or value of the article, and it pays the precise amount of duty previously fixed by law. They present no temptations to the appraisers of foreign goods, who receive but small salaries, and might, by undervaluation in a few cases, render themselves independent.

Besides, specific duties best conform to the requisition in the Constitution, that "no preference shall be given by any regulation of commerce or revenue to the ports of one State over those of another." Under our *ad valorem* system such preferences are to some extent inevitable, and complaints have often been made that the spirit of this provision has been violated by a lower appraisement of the same articles at one port than at another.

An impression strangely enough prevails, to some extent, that specific duties are necessarily protective duties. Nothing can be more fallacious. Great Britain glories in free trade, and yet her whole revenue from imports is at the present moment collected under a system of specific duties. It is a striking fact in this connection, that in the commercial treaty of January 23, 1860, between France and England, one of the articles provides that the *ad valorem* duties which it imposes shall be converted into specific duties within six months from its date, and these are to be ascertained by making an average of the prices for six months previous to that time. The reverse of the propositions would be nearer to the truth, because a much larger amount of revenue would be collected by merely converting the *ad valorem* duties of a tariff into equivalent specific duties. To this extent the revenue would be increased, and in the same proportion the specific duty might be diminished.

Specific duties would secure to the American manufacturer the incidental protection to which he is fairly entitled under a revenue tariff, and to this surely no person would object. The framers of the existing tariff have gone further, and in a liberal spirit have discriminated in favor of large and useful branches of our manufactures, not by raising the rate of duty upon the importation of similar articles from abroad, but, what is the



same in effect, by admitting articles free of duty which enter into the composition of their fabrics.

Under the present system, it has been often truly remarked that this incidental protection decreases when the manufacturer needs it most and increases when he needs it least, and constitutes a sliding scale which always operates against him. The revenues of the country are subject to similar fluctuations. Instead of approaching a steady standard, as would be the case under a system of specific duties, they sink and rise with the sinking and rising prices of articles in foreign countries. It would not be difficult for Congress to arrange a system of specific duties which would afford additional stability both to our revenue and our manufactures, and without injury or injustice to any interest of the country. This might be accomplished by ascertaining the average value of any given article for a series of years at the place of exportation, and by simply converting the rate of *ad valorem* duty upon it, which might be deemed necessary for revenue purposes, into the form of a specific duty. Such an arrangement could not injure the consumer. If he should pay a greater amount of duty one year, this would be counterbalanced by a lesser amount the next, and in the end the aggregate would be the same.

I desire to call your immediate attention to the present condition of the Treasury, so ably and clearly presented by the Secretary, in his report to Congress; and to recommend that measures be promptly adopted, to enable it to discharge its pressing obligations. The other recommendations of the report are well worthy of your favorable consideration.

I herewith transmit to Congress the reports of the Secretaries of War, of the Navy, of the Interior, and of the Postmaster General. The recommendations and suggestions which they contain are highly valuable, and deserve your careful attention.

The report of the Postmaster General details the circumstances under which Cornelius Vanderbilt, on my request, agreed, in the month of July last, to carry the ocean mails between our Atlantic and Pacific coasts. Had he not thus acted, this important intercommunication must have been suspended, at least for a season. The Postmaster General had no power to make him any other compensation than the postages on the mail matter, which he might carry. It was known at the time that

these postages would fall far short of an adequate compensation, as well as of the sum which the same service had previously cost the government. Mr. Vanderbilt, in a commendable spirit, was willing to rely upon the justice of Congress to make up the deficiency; and I, therefore, recommend that an appropriation may be granted for this purpose.

I should do great injustice to the Attorney General, were I to omit the mention of his distinguished services in the measures adopted and prosecuted by him for the defence of the government against numerous and unfounded claims to land in California, purporting to have been made by the Mexican government previous to the treaty of cession. The successful opposition to these claims has saved the United States public property, worth many millions of dollars, and to individuals holding title under them to at least an equal amount.

It has been represented to me, from sources which I deem reliable, that the inhabitants in several portions of Kansas have been reduced nearly to a state of starvation, on account of the almost total failure of their crops, whilst the harvests in every other portion of the country have been abundant. The prospect before them for the approaching winter is well calculated to enlist the sympathies of every heart. The destitution appears to be so general that it cannot be relieved by private contributions, and they are in such indigent circumstances as to be unable to purchase the necessities of life for themselves. I refer the subject to Congress. If any constitutional measure for their relief can be devised, I would recommend its adoption.

I cordially commend to your favorable regard the interests of the people of this District. They are eminently entitled to your consideration, especially since, unlike the people of the States, they can appeal to no government except that of the Union.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON CITY, December 3, 1860.

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Note.—In connection with that part of the foregoing message which relates to the distinction between coercing a State and coercing the individuals within a State, it is proper to reproduce here a letter addressed to the *Philadelphia Times* by Mr. George Ticknor Curtis, the biographer of Mr. Buchanan, and published in that journal in 1883. The letter is as follows:

RICHFIELD SPRINGS, August 20, 1883.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "TIMES":

The publication of the life of President Buchanan was followed within a week by an amount of criticism such as I do not remember to have seen bestowed on any similar book in the same space of time. I was much gratified by the extent of the interest that appears to be taken in the work and its subject. For what was complimentary to the author I feel grateful; to what imputed literary fault or shortcoming, I trust I have been suitably attentive; for what assailed me in a bad spirit no one will expect me to care. But it is not on account of myself that I now wish to advert to this mass of criticism. As respects the final estimate to be put upon the public character and conduct of Mr. Buchanan, there has been a good deal of candid, just, and fair writing, and some of the reviews have been marked by great ability, thoughtfulness, and penetration. Others have been simply and obviously the tactics of party organs, in which vituperation and reiterated slander have been the staple. There is, however, one topic to be extracted out of the friendly and unfriendly discussion of Mr. Buchanan's course in 1860-61, to which I wish to ask the attention of your readers.

## THE QUESTION OF COERCION.

This relates to the distinction between coercing a State and coercing the individual inhabitants of a State—a distinction on which President Buchanan based one great branch of the policy of his administration, in preparing to encounter the secession movement. This is not a merely theoretical question, for, although—so far as we can now see—there is very little probability that another attempt to dismember this Federal Republic upon the principle of secession as it was asserted in 1860-61 will ever be made, yet it is and must remain an important practical question in what way an unconstitutional step on the part of a State is to be encountered. Hence it is that the distinction between coercing a State by an application of force to keep within its constitutional orbit in all its public and corporate acts as a State, and the enforcement of the supremacy of the Federal Constitution and the laws enacted in the exercise of its granted powers by acting on the persons of individual inhabitants of the State, is just as important now and must remain just as important hereafter, as it was when the great revolt of 1860-61 had to be met. The question whether this was a distinction without a difference is therefore not only of consequence in reference to what was done or maintained by Mr. Buchanan or any other statesman in the beginning of the secession movement or in the progress of the Civil War, but it is also of consequence in the future. Let us see, then, whether the distinction is a solid one.

This may be determined by applying the test of a hypothetical case. Let it be supposed, then, that at the time when the Legislature of Massachusetts had it in contemplation to pass the laws which became known as "liberty bills," and which put actual obstructions in the way of the extradition of fugitives from service, the President of the United States had stationed an army on Boston Common and had directed the commanding general to inform the Legislature that if they did not desist from that act of nullification he would shell the State House or would disperse them at

the point of the bayonet. There can be no question that Massachusetts did pass and did keep on her statute-book for a long time laws that were directly in conflict with an important provision of the Federal Constitution and subversive of its supremacy. If the President of the United States can properly apply coercion to one State to prevent her from adopting an ordinance of secession so-called, he can, with equal propriety, apply coercion to another State to prevent her from nullifying or attempting to nullify a particular provision of the Federal Constitution or the laws of the United States passed in pursuance of it. The only difference between the two cases is that in the one there is an attempt to arrest the operation of the whole Constitution within the limits of the State, and in the other there is an attempt to arrest the operation of one only of its provisions. In both cases the right of the Federal Government to preserve its own existence and to maintain the supremacy of its own constitution is, as a principle, alike involved. The sole question is, by what means is this to be done? Is it to be done by applying force to the State to prevent her from perpetrating the unconstitutional act on paper, or is it to be done by compelling her citizens to obey the Constitution and laws of the United States, notwithstanding the void act which has been put on the records of the State? The fact that an ordinance of so-called secession undertakes to withdraw the State from the Union *in toto*, while the single unconstitutional law withdraws it from the Union only in part, makes a difference not in kind, but in degree. The right and the duty of the Federal Government to preserve its own existence and to maintain the supremacy of the Federal Constitution is the same in both cases.

#### COERCION APPLIED TO LIBERTY BILLS.

What would have been said, then, if President Pierce or President Fillmore had threatened to apply coercion to any of the States that passed the laws that were called "liberty bills" for the purpose of preventing their enactment? Would not the whole country have cried out, "You, Mr. President, have no authority to control the legislative action of a State. You have only to wait the enactment of the laws which you say are unconstitutional, subject them to the proper judicial test, and then execute upon individuals the process of the Federal tribunals by whatever force may be requisite to put down the obstructions." This would have been the answer of all sound constitutional jurists. What is the answer in the case of a threatened secession of a State from the Union *in toto*? It is this: The ordinance of secession will be utterly void. Let it be adopted if persuasion and reason will not prevent the people of the State from doing a void and rash act. Then proceed to execute the laws of the United States within that State, just as you would have executed them if no such ordinance had been adopted. If the Federal Executive and Judicial officers resign their places, appoint others. If the existing laws of the United States do not put within your control the force necessary to execute process upon individuals, call upon Congress to provide you with that force, and when you have obtained it put down all obstructions that you find in your way. This is not to make war upon the State. It is the exercise of a power that is conferred on the Federal Government by the Constitution; a power that has been exercised over and over again, and may have to be exercised hereafter. When the

scale and theatre of the resistance become so extensive that in the exercise of the power to remove obstructions the laws of war have to be brought into operation, they come into operation not as they do in prosecuting a war against a foreign nation, but as rules which are necessary to restrain the ferocity of a contest between a government and its citizens while it lasts. They do not dissolve the allegiance of the citizen. They do not convert him into a foreign enemy. When the contest is over and he is subdued he is liable to all the penalties of treason, and it is a mere question of policy whether those penalties shall be enforced. The autonomy, the constitutional existence, the Federal relations of his State remain as they were before the contest began.

#### THE POWER OF THE CONSTITUTION TO ENFORCE UNION.

But it has been said again and again that the secession of the Southern States made a case against which the Constitution itself had made no provision; a case for which the ordinary means of enforcing the laws were inadequate; that the Government was bound, in the absence of any available constitutional means, to fall back upon the powers implied in its right of existence, and that if a man like Jackson had been in Buchanan's place he would have resorted to coercion in some form as a necessary measure of governmental self-preservation. Here is precisely where I differ from all the recent critics who have questioned Buchanan's course, even from some of those who have considerably and fairly conceded his patriotic intent. In the first place, I ask whether we are to have it understood hereafter that when a State undertakes to violate a provision of the Federal Constitution there is no constitutional remedy, but that resort must be had to the extra constitutional method, or to a method implied in the vague and boundless right of self-preservation? I do not understand the reasoning, or the assumption, which begins with the position that the Constitution has within itself no means, or no adequate means, for encountering such a case as the secession of a State. If the Constitution is so defective, it is just as defective to-day as it ever was. I deny the defect. The provision which the Constitution has made for its own supremacy through its judicial power, and through the President's oath of office, which binds him to the execution of the laws, excludes a resort to any other means of self-preservation, because these are the very means which the Constitution provided for the very purpose. They have the only adequacy which the Constitution ever contemplated. They are, moreover, in fact, adequate. They are direct, efficacious, operating just where they ought to operate—that is, upon the conduct and persons of individuals. They leave no room for excursions into the boundless realms of a supposed NECESSITY. We know by the record that these means were chosen in the formation of the Constitution for the express purpose of excluding a resort to coercion or force of any kind applied to a State to keep it in its constitutional orbit. When I hear or read of the coercion which Buchanan ought to have applied I am obliged to ask, Coercion for what purpose? Why, of course, to prevent a State, by force, from adopting an ordinance of secession. Then by the same token a President may now or hereafter say to a State: "If you attempt to enact a law that will violate one of the provisions of the Federal Constitution, I will disperse



your Legislature by my bayonets. I am the Commander-in-Chief. This Government has a right to exist and to forestall and prevent anything that threatens its existence." Where shall we be if this doctrine is to prevail? It is perfectly plain that if Buchanan had resorted to any other means than those which the Constitution had provided for, we should have had this constitutional Government converted into a military despotism more than twenty years ago.

#### JACKSON AND BUCHANAN.

Then, in regard to Jackson, or to "a man like Jackson;" if what a man did, in an emergency that is supposed to bear some resemblance to a subsequent and much greater emergency, be any criterion of what he would have done in the later case, I undertake to show that General Jackson, had he been President in 1860, would, in all human probability, have done just what Buchanan did. I am perfectly aware that "Old Hickory," in the personal provocation given to him by the insolence of the South Carolina Legislature, used very strong language and uttered in conversation some threats of seizing the persons of the Nullifiers. But he was surrounded by a body of constitutional advisers and political friends who would never have consented to any such step. Edward Livingston, Roger B. Taney, Levi Woodbury, Benjamin F. Butler, and Mahlon Dickerson, not to mention hosts of other Democrats, never would have allowed even Jackson to act otherwise than in a strictly constitutional manner in dealing with nullification. Moreover, with all his characteristic propensity to strong measures, he had an extraordinary power of self-control, and could curb his own passions when it was necessary that he should do so. He was, too, a far better constitutional lawyer than he has ever had the credit of being; for although he could not, perhaps, formulate a constitutional argument on paper as well as some other men, he had great constitutional sagacity and penetration, which enabled him to discern the boundaries of Federal authority. What he would have done in 1860 is to be measured not by his violent talk, but by his official acts in 1833; and these show unmistakably that both he and his advisers acted on the same principle which governed the course of Buchanan; for, instead of undertaking to coerce the State of South Carolina, by acting on her convention or her Legislature, his administration proceeded to put in motion the very means contemplated by the Constitution for enforcing the supremacy of the Federal laws. The State Legislature, after the ordinance had pronounced the tariff unconstitutional and directed the Legislature to arrest its operation within the limits of the State, passed a law for a replevin by the sheriff of the goods that might be seized by the marshal, and provided the sheriff with a military force to maintain his possession. To encounter and frustrate this nullification of the Federal statute, what did General Jackson do? Did he tell the Legislature that if they attempted to pass such a law he would disperse them? On the contrary, he asked Congress to pass the well-known "Force Bill," and he asked Webster to aid in framing and enacting it. It was enacted at once; and it provided for the transfer of any actions of replevin from the State Courts into the Federal Courts, where the State laws could be declared to be violations of the Federal Constitution. To enforce the decisions of the Federal Courts all the necessary *posse*



*comitatus* was given to the marshal, and it was for the regular and proper collection of the duties, and for no other purpose, that the President sent a small military and naval force into the port of Charleston. If, therefore, there was any parallel between the case of nullification and the case of secession, Jackson did in principle what Buchanan endeavored to get Congress to enable him to do. He had to collect the revenue in the port of Charleston. The collector had resigned. Buchanan nominated a suitable successor and the Senate would not confirm him. He had to execute the laws of the United States through the Federal tribunals, and the Federal judge and the marshal had resigned. To re-establish the Federal machinery in South Carolina, obstructions had to be removed. To remove them required means of compelling individuals to obey the laws of the United States. The "Force Bill" of 1833 had expired by its own limitation. There was no existing law under which the President could call for volunteers or could call out the militia to suppress insurrections against the United States. The President asked for such new laws, and he personally attended to the framing of the bills. That Congress never enacted one of them, nor was any provision for such purposes made until the civil war had been for some time raging. President Buchanan, from October, 1860, to March 4th, 1861, had but five companies of regular troops within his reach, and by the middle of January, 1861, South Carolina was armed to the teeth.

#### THE REPUBLICAN CONGRESS AND BUCHANAN.

This brings me, therefore, to the consideration of what has been said by some of the recent critics concerning the reason why the Republican leaders in Congress were unwilling to trust Buchanan with the executive means for which he asked. I have read with great care all the most important of the recent suggestions, and the fairest and most considerate of them amounts only to this, that the Republicans distrusted a President who, although he asked for the necessary military preparations, was at the same time urging measures of conciliation. One of the most impartial of the critics has said that, while the inference drawn by the Republicans that Buchanan was not to be trusted was a natural one, yet it was not a justifiable one, and he admits emphatically that I have shown it was not. My own view of the temper and spirit of the Republican leaders in Congress at that time has always been that it partook largely of a temper and spirit that animated other prominent men who were in other important public positions, and I think it may be well illustrated by something that happened within my personal knowledge. Every one who remembers what was taking place remembers what a gallant struggle was made by the Union men in Georgia to prevent the secession of that State. Her secession ordinance was not passed until the 19th of January, 1861. At that time I was a citizen of Massachusetts. The Legislature of Massachusetts was to assemble on the first Monday in January, and the newly-elected Governor, the Hon. John A. Andrew, was then to be inaugurated. There stood on the statute-book of the State at that time a law which was an act of nullification of the Constitution and law of the United States on the subject of the extradition of fugitives from service, as palpably as the law of South Carolina had thirty years before been a nullification of the tariff. The most eminent jurists of Massachusetts held this law of the

State to be unconstitutional, and it was certainly unnecessary. In the latter part of December, just after South Carolina had seceded, I received from a very active Union man in Georgia, of great eminence and influence, an earnest letter, portraying the struggle that was then pending in that State, and asking if something could not be done to bring about a repeal of these so-called "Liberty Laws." The writer of the letter said that this concession on the part of Massachusetts would greatly strengthen the hands of the Union party in Georgia, and would go far to enable them to win a victory.

Let it be observed that this had nothing to do with slavery in the Territories. If the concession should be made it would not touch a single dogma of the Chicago platform on which Mr. Lincoln had been elected. My first impulse was to apply to Governor Banks, who was going out of office, but, on reflection, I thought that an outgoing Governor would not be likely to take the responsibility of making any recommendation on the subject, and I did not know Governor Banks personally as well as I knew the gentleman who was to be his successor. I wrote a note to Governor Andrew and he called to see me. After reading to him the letter of my Georgia correspondent, whose name and patriotic exertions for the Union were well known to him, I said: "Mr. Andrew, this is a matter that rises above all party considerations. The concession that is asked for on the part of our State is one that all parties can unite in for the purpose of aiding the Union men in Georgia in their contest with the secessionists. We are only asked to take off from our statute-book a law, which the ablest men among us, of both parties, have long regarded as unconstitutional. Will you not recommend this step in your inaugural message?" "No," said the Governor; "I will not make such a concession." "But, my dear sir," I replied, "you see the situation: South Carolina has already seceded; if Georgia secedes, other Gulf States will follow, and sooner or later there will be a civil war. You do not, I know, wish to see a civil war. Why will you not advise our Legislature to make this very small concession?" "Sir," said Mr. Andrew, "if it pleases the Lord to strike those people down there with judicial blindness, I am not going out of my way to help them. If they choose to secede, let them, and if there is to be a civil war, let it come." I did not report his language to my friend in Georgia, but I was sorrowfully obliged to inform him that nothing could be done. Now, Governor Andrew was an excellent and kind-hearted as well as an able man, but he had wrought himself into the conviction that the North should make no concessions to the South. His state of mind was very much the same with that of the Northern Senators in Congress who would not make the small concession of the "Crittenden Compromise." Undoubtedly it was most unfortunate that they were confronted in the Senate by Jefferson Davis and the other secessionists, who kept up, as long as they remained there, the ceaseless din of the right of secession, who were continually saying that it must be peaceably allowed, and that any kind of coercion would be war. This aggravated the Northern Senators, most certainly, and strengthened their unwillingness to make any concession. But I remember well how I longed to see some Northern man rise in the Senate and, speaking to both sections, as Webster would have spoken, scatter the doctrine of constitutional secession to the winds, and then tell the North that in dealing with the passions of great

communities in such a crisis and before the clash of arms was begun, a government never loses anything of dignity or strength when it takes the olive branch in one hand while it holds the sword in the other. To borrow a striking phrase of one of the recent critics, it was a forcible illustration of the "irony of fortune" that Buchanan had no one of commanding influence in the Senate to second him, as I have no doubt Webster would have done if he had not been sleeping the everlasting sleep on the shore of Marshfield. Party spirit or anything else may lead men to say that Buchanan wished to have secession enough to force the Republican Party back from its recent triumph; but it will ever remain a decisive answer to this charge that he pointed out to that Congress the only possible means by which secession could be encountered within the limits of the Constitution, and it is no disparagement to him whatever that he did not go out of the Constitution in search of means which would have inevitably converted our Government into a power without law, chart, or compass. I think I have read that General Grant would have been the kind of man for the emergency. Alas! those who think so are little aware what they impute to the character of General Grant when they suggest that he would have found a way to encounter secession which the Constitution had not furnished to him. He might have found a way to make a military despotism, but if he had been President in 1860 he could never have restored the Constitution of the United States after he had conquered the South if he had done what these critics say Buchanan should have done.

#### THE POOR EXCUSE OF DISTRUSTING BUCHANAN.

It is a poor excuse for the Northern members of that Congress to say that they distrusted Buchanan. The argument proves a great deal too much. Did they distrust Lincoln, also? The Presidency never dies. The Executive power is held to-day by one man and to-morrow at twelve o'clock it passes into the hands of another man. It is the same power, comprehending the same functions, the same duties, the same relations to the Legislative department, whether the man who holds it is named Buchanan or Lincoln, and whether he is called Democrat or Republican. It was the Executive power that Mr. Buchanan begged and implored that Congress to strengthen; not *his* power, not James Buchanan's power, but the power of the President of the United States. The bills for this purpose which Mr. Buchanan personally revised were well and suitably drawn. They covered the whole field, supplying amply the means which the Constitution contemplated for preserving the life and vigor of the Government. Congress had an abundance of time to enact them into laws, for the last of the Gulf States seceded on the 5th of February, 1861, and when their Senators and Representatives were gone from the Capitol the Republicans could, before the 4th of March, have passed without obstruction the very bills that Buchanan urged upon them and which he stood publicly pledged to approve. If they feared that Buchanan would not execute them, why did they not, before the term of their authority would expire, put them on the statute-book to be executed by their own President, who was to be inaugurated on the day when Buchanan was to go out of office? They suffered that Congress to go out of existence without taking a single step to strengthen the Executive power in any direction, either

upon the theory of coercing States or coercing individuals. What was the consequence? When Mr. Lincoln came into office he had no authority of law to call out the militia or to call for volunteers in order to suppress insurrections against the United States or to collect the revenue outside of custom-houses, nor had he the necessary means to reconstruct the Federal judiciary in the seceding or the seceded States. When, after more than a month of informal negotiation between the Lincoln Administration and the Confederate Commissioners and other persons about the evacuation of Fort Sumter, it was determined to re-enforce that garrison, and re-enforcements were sent and Beauregard was ordered by Davis to bombard the fort, and it was done—when the Civil War was thus begun—Mr. Lincoln's call for seventy-five thousand men was made, and had to be made, without any legal authority. When the first troops from the North poured into Washington, after forcing their way through Maryland, there was not the slightest preparation by the Government to receive them; no billeting, no subsistence, no forage, no anything; all was at first confusion worse confounded; private individuals and extemporized local committees had to do the whole. Whose fault was this? Certainly it was not the fault of President Lincoln or his Secretary of War. It was the fault of that Congress, which had expired on the 4th of March without having made any provision either to coerce the seceded States back into the Union, or to execute the laws of the United States upon individuals, or to recapture the public property in the seceded States, or to do anything that would save the border States from being swept into the control of the Montgomery Confederacy.

#### BUCHANAN AND THE ARMY.

I will not again answer the reiterated slanders which have accused the Buchanan Administration of having placed and kept the regular military and naval forces of the Government where they could be of no avail in the coming emergency. I have accounted for the position of the army and for the position of every important vessel of the navy in the month of December, 1860, and in the three following months, and if critics will not read, or having read will not fairly admit the truth, their and my readers will know how to estimate their criticisms. It is as plain as the noonday sun that without new legislation the Government of the United States was, in the then situation of things, practically powerless to encounter secession, whether you call secession revolution or call it rebellion, or call it anything else. For the needed legislation there was ample time before the 4th of March, and that legislation never came until after the Civil War was raging and the Confederate Government was seated at Richmond, with the whole of great and historic Virginia at its absolute command, along with all vigorous North Carolina, and with nearly half the people of Missouri, Tennessee, and Kentucky in active sympathy and co-operation with all its doings.

#### THE GOVERNMENT AND REVOLUTION.

But there is one other view which has been respectfully urged by more than one of the critics in the most considerate terms, and it shall have a respectful answer. To formulate it as I understand what has been written

and published, and as it has reached me privately from sources entitled to my most sincere respect, it may be stated thus: Within the limits of the Constitution, Mr. Buchanan may have had no adequate means to encounter secession without new legislation. But secession was, in fact, revolution; and as every government has, by the great law of self-preservation, the right to encounter revolution, what was needed was the exercise by the President of powers such as any government would resort to in encountering a revolution which threatens its very existence and aims to terminate it. As the natural right of revolution is bounded by no law, so, it is argued, the correlative right of a government to prevent the success of a revolution is not to be measured by positive law or established precedent. Mr. Buchanan failed to perceive and act upon this correlative right of the Government to prevent a revolution from becoming successful, although the purity and patriotism of his motives must be conceded.

The first answer to this criticism is that the ordinances of secession and the public proceedings of the States which seceded before the 4th of March, 1861, based the alleged right of secession not upon any right of revolution, but upon a certain construction of the Constitution of the United States, as a right impliedly reserved to the States by the nature and effect of that instrument. It was the Constitution itself, therefore, to which the Government of the United States was to look for the means of encountering such an asserted right of a State to absolve its people from the duty of obeying the laws of the United States, and those means were to execute the laws of the United States upon individuals in spite of the secession ordinances.

But, in the next place, if secession was practically and in effect an attempt at revolution, the case for the Government of the United States is not altered by the name that is given to the attempt. Nullification by a State of a single act of Congress is practically a revolution *pro tanto*. But to base it on the inherent right of revolution against intolerable oppression, or to call it an attempt to make a revolution, does not enlarge the sphere or enhance the means in and by which a constitutional government like that of the United States is to act in a case of such resistance to its authority. In other words, it is not correct to say that, because the natural right to make a revolution is boundless in its scope and justifiable by its success, a constitutional government holds a correlative right to resort to any and all means to prevent that success. If the government is one that has in its own fundamental law express provision for the assertion of its authority, and legislative, judicial, and executive means of defending that authority against all resistance by combinations of men or public bodies, whether they are nullifications, secessions, insurrections, rebellions, attempted revolutions, or what not, whether they extend to a total overthrow of the legitimate authority or are only aimed at one exercise of that authority, the whole field is covered; and the government, if it intends to preserve its constitutional authority and the great law of its being, and not to make itself a party to a revolution in its turn, must reject all distinction between nullifications, secessions, revolutions, rebellions, and insurrections, and must act by encountering them all in the method provided for it by the great law that has given it the right to exist and to defend its existence. Mr. Buchanan saw this with perfect clearness of vision from the first. But he was not the only man of that period who saw



it. Mr. Seward, for example, saw it and acted upon it for a short time, although he soon went to the extreme of exercising revolutionary, arbitrary, and extra constitutional powers, upon the idea of the correlative right of a government to measure its own powers by the unlimited powers of those who were said to be trying to accomplish a revolution. Mr. Seward's letter of April 10th, 1861, to Mr. Adams, is worthy of the attention of the critics of Mr. Buchanan's course. It is the glory of our Constitution that it has within itself all the necessary means for encountering any emergency, and if our Civil War and its result have not taught this lesson, all the blood was shed and all the treasure expended in vain.

Finally, you cannot, by calling secession "revolution," or treating it as an attempt at revolution, change in one iota the relative functions and duties of the President and the Congress. The President can no more encounter an attempted revolution without being supplied by Congress with the necessary means, especially when Congress is in session, than he can proceed on his own sole authority in ordinary and peaceful times to do anything without law. If there is a threatened revolution the President can make himself a dictator, if he will, and the people will permit him, and so he and the people can destroy the Government in the process of preserving it. But the President happens to have taken a solemn oath to his God to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States; and this binds him by all the force that can rest upon the conscience of man to preserve, protect, and defend the authority and function of every department of the Government in its appropriate sphere, whether he has to encounter a revolution, or to enforce a civil execution for five hundred dollars, or to sign the death warrant of a convicted criminal, or to issue a patent for a tract of land.

#### WAS REBELLION INEVITABLE?

There is one other of the recent criticisms of Mr. Buchanan's course on which I will say a few words. The Civil War, it is said, was bound to come. The temper of the North and the South toward each other had become such that it was nothing short of an entire lack of prescience and wisdom in Mr. Buchanan that he did not see the uselessness of all efforts at conciliation. The war had to come; slavery had to be destroyed by force; the irrepressible conflict had culminated; it could not be arrested. It is not probable that this will be the final judgment of history. But suppose it is. Make the case as strong as the facts will warrant, and then add your belief that civil war had become inevitable. No aspect which you can give to the case, no belief in the inevitable conflict that you can hold, will vary in the least degree the political, the patriotic, the public, or the moral duty of a statesman situated as Mr. Buchanan was.

The fact, if it is a fact, that the two sections had become so embittered against each other that the voice of moderating wisdom was not likely to be heard, could not render it the less a duty for Buchanan to utter that voice in all earnestness and sincerity. There can be no exasperation of nation against nation, no excitement of section against section in the same country, no conflict of human passions or interests, in which the beatitude pronounced for the peace-makers can ever be lost. We may refine as we please about the course of God's providence; we may say that war is permitted for inscrutable



purposes, or that it works out of slaughter and desolation and brave men's lives and widows' tears and the orphan's destitution great and beneficent ends. Human anger, self-interest, popular violence, ambition, greed of power, greed of gain, love of country, love of honor, philanthropy, real or pretended—a thousand vices and ten thousand virtues—may all be wrought into the multitudinous means by which the Almighty governs the world. But notwithstanding all this, the statesman who does not labor to avert the calamity of civil war by every means within his reach that may be consistent with the dictates of an enlightened conscience, fails to fulfil a duty that is just as divinely appointed as the duty of the soldier can be said to be after the clash of arms has begun and the battle is raging. This was true when Buchanan was subjected to his great trial, and it will remain true of all other men in like situations to the end of time. Is it said that he strove to save his party and to save slavery, because he tried to save the Union by compromise and conciliation? Well, what is this but to judge him by an utterly uncharitable judgment? Do you imagine that posterity is going to judge him in this way? We can so judge him to-day, if we will; in the near to-morrow of another age he will be judged by another tribunal, and even now it may behoove us to take care how we permit the rising generation to be misled concerning the man who propounded and asserted the constitutional doctrine that saved us of the North from having a conquered Ireland or a subjugated Poland on our hands.

#### THE AUTHOR'S LIFETIME VIEWS OF COERCION.

Let me conclude, Mr. Editor, by saying that the distinction between coercing a State and enforcing the laws of the United States upon individuals is no new one with me, nor has it been adopted for the purpose of defending President Buchanan; nor did I derive it from him, much as I respect and honor him for the clear and forcible manner in which he stated it. It was in substance set forth in an oration which I delivered on the 4th of July, 1862, before the municipal authorities of the city of Boston, and which was published in pamphlet by the city government at the time, and was twice printed at length in the *New York Journal of Commerce*. If any one cares anything about the consistency of my opinions or attaches any importance to them, he can compare what I said in 1862 with what I have said in the recent "Life of Buchanan;" or he can go back to an earlier period and consult Chapter XII. of Volume II. of my history of the Constitution, first published in 1854; or he can come down to a period since the Civil War and consult a published lecture which I delivered in New York in 1875, long before I ever knew Mr. Buchanan's executors or a single member of his family. In fact, from the years of my earliest manhood to this day I never had but one set of opinions upon the mode in which the Government of the United States is to maintain its rightful supremacy, and those opinions have been expressed by me quite as freely and frequently as could become a citizen who never held or sought an official position.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEORGE TICKNOR CURTIS.

TO MR. PHILLIPS.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON 5 Dec: 1860.

MY DEAR SIR/

Many thanks for your favorable opinion of the Message! I prize it highly, I assure you. It will at first be condemned at the North & the South. I must rely upon the sober second thought for justice.

I understand the Republican Journals of Philadelphia condemn it in the severest terms. Surely that is a doomed City. Whilst all parts of the Country will suffer dreadfully from Disunion, the manufactures of Philadelphia must in a great degree be prostrated.

They say there is a contradiction between my opinion that States cannot constitutionally secede & a denial of the power to compel them to remain in the Union. Not in the least! The laws must be executed by the President until this is impossible with the means in his power. Then when the question arises whether Congress shall prosecute a civil war against a State to conquer her, comes the question of power.

In haste, I remain always

Very respectfully your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: HENRY M. PHILLIPS.

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MESSAGE

ON A CONVENTION WITH COSTA RICA.<sup>2</sup>

TO THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES:

I transmit, for the consideration of the Senate with a view to ratification, a convention for the adjustment of claims of citizens of the United States against the Government of the Republic of Costa Rica, signed by the plenipotentiaries of the contracting parties at San José, on the second day of July last.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON, 5 December, 1860.

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<sup>1</sup> Dreer Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>2</sup> Senate Executive Journal, XI. 239.

## MESSAGE

ON THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE.<sup>1</sup>

TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

In answer to the resolution of the House of Representatives of the 9th of April last, requesting information concerning the African slave trade, I transmit a report from the Secretary of State, and the documents by which it was accompanied.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON, December 5, 1860.

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MEMORANDUM.<sup>2</sup>

[December 10, 1860.]

Monday morning, 10th December, 1860, the within paper was presented to me by Messrs. McQueen, Miles, and Bonham. I objected to the word "provided," as this might be construed

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<sup>1</sup> H. Ex. Doc. 7, 36 Cong. 2 Sess.

<sup>2</sup> This memorandum, which is printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 377, with appropriate explanations, is endorsed, in President Buchanan's handwriting, on the following letter:

TO HIS EXCELLENCY JAMES BUCHANAN,  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES:

In compliance with our statement to you yesterday, we now express to you our strong convictions that neither the constituted authorities nor any body of the people of the State of South Carolina will either attack or molest the United States forts in the harbor of Charleston previously to the action of the convention, and, we hope and believe, not until an offer has been made through an accredited representative to negotiate for an amicable arrangement of all matters between the State and the Federal Government, provided that no reinforcements shall be sent into those forts, and their relative military status remain as at present.

JOHN McQUEEN,  
WM. PORCHER MILES,  
M. L. BONHAM,  
W. W. BOYCE,  
LAWRENCE M. KEITT.

WASHINGTON, December 9, 1860.

into an agreement on my part which I never would make. They said nothing was further from their intention. They did not so understand it, and I should not so consider it. Afterwards Messrs. McQueen and Bonham called, in behalf of the delegation, and gave me the most positive assurance that the forts and public property would not be molested until after commissioners had been appointed to treat with the Federal Government in relation to the public property, and until the decision was known. I informed them that what would be done was a question for Congress and not for the Executive. That if they [the forts] were assailed, this would put them completely in the wrong, and making them the authors of the civil war. They gave the same assurances to Messrs. Floyd, Thompson, and others.

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### MEMORANDUM.<sup>1</sup>

[December 11, 1860.]

Tuesday, 11th December, 1860, General Cass announced to me his purpose to resign.

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### FROM GENERAL CASS.<sup>2</sup>

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, Dec. 12, 1860.

SIR:

The present alarming crisis in our National affairs has engaged your serious consideration, and in your recent message you have expressed to Congress, and through Congress to the Country, the views you have formed

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; S. Ex. Doc. 7, 41 Cong. 1 Sess. 1-2; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 397. Among the Buchanan Papers in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, there is a letter from Mr. Slidell to Mr. Buchanan, dated Feb. 19, 1857, relating to the offer of the Secretaryship of State to General Cass, and reading as follows:

"I have yours of 17 inst. I have seen Genl. Cass this morning in company with Bright. I read him all that part of yours relating to himself,

respecting the questions, fraught with the most momentous consequences, which are now presented to the American people for solution. With the general principles laid down in that message I fully concur, and I appreciate with warm sympathy its patriotic appeals and suggestions. What measures it is competent and proper for the Executive to adopt under existing circumstances is a subject which has received your most careful attention, and with the anxious hope, as I well know, from having participated in the deliberations, that tranquillity and good feeling may be speedily restored to this agitated and divided Confederacy.

In some points which I deem of vital importance, it has been my misfortune to differ from you.

It has been my decided opinion, which for some time past I have urged at various meetings of the Cabinet, that additional troops should be sent to reinforce the forts in the harbor of Charleston, with a view to their better defence should they be attacked, and that an armed vessel should likewise be ordered there, to aid, if necessary, in the defence, and also, should it be required, in the collection of the revenue; and it is yet my opinion that these measures should be adopted without the least delay. I have likewise urged the expediency of immediately removing the Custom House at Charleston to one of the forts in the port, and of making arrangements for the collection of the duties there by having a Collector and other officers ready to act when necessary, so that when the office may become vacant, the proper authority may be there to collect the duties on the part of the United States. I continue to think that these arrangements should be immediately made. While the right and the responsibility of deciding belong to you, it is very desirable that at this perilous juncture there should be, as far as possible, unanimity in your Councils, with a view to safe and efficient action.

I have therefore felt it my duty to tender you my resignation of the office of Secretary of State, and to ask your permission to retire from that official association with yourself and the members of your Cabinet which I have enjoyed during almost four years without the occurrence of a single incident to interrupt the personal intercourse which has so happily existed.

I cannot close this letter without bearing my testimony to the zealous and earnest devotion to the best interests of the Country with which during a term of unexampled trials and troubles you have sought to discharge the duties of your high station.

Thanking you for the kindness and confidence you have not ceased to manifest towards me, and with the expression of my warmest regard both for yourself and the gentlemen of your Cabinet, I am, sir, with great respect,

Your obedient servant,

LEWIS CASS.

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excepting the two or three lines in which you speak of the special objections to his son. He assents without reserve or qualification to all your suggestions. As to the Assistant Secretaryship, he remarked that you could probably suggest a better choice than he, & that he would prefer leaving that matter in your hands. I am sure that although you may occasionally be compelled to take the laboring oar out of the ordinary course of duty, you can get along with the General better than with any other person."

MEMORANDUM.<sup>1</sup>

[December 15, 1860.]

Saturday, 15 Dec: [1860], Judge Black in the evening delivered me General Cass's Letter of resignation, dated on Wednesday, 12 December.

I was very much surprised on the 11 December to learn from General Cass that he intended to resign. All our official intercourse up till this moment had been marked by unity of purpose, sentiment, & action. Indeed, the General had always been treated by me with extreme kindness. This was due to his age & his high character. Most of the important Despatches which bear his name were written, or chiefly written, for him by Mr. Appleton, Judge Black, & myself. His original drafts were generally so prolix & so little to the point that they had to be written over again entirely, or so little was suffered to remain as to make them new Despatches. All this was done with so much delicacy & tenderness that, to the extent of my knowledge, General Cass always cheerfully & even gratefully assented. So timid was he & so little confidence had he in himself, that it was difficult for him to arrive at any decision of the least consequence. He brought many questions to me which he ought to have decided himself. When obliged to decide for himself, he called Mr. Cobb & Judge Black to his assistance. In the course of the administration I have been often reminded of the opinion of him expressed to me by General Jackson.

I had been at the War Department a short time before General Cass was appointed minister to France. In the course of conversation he made particular inquiries of me as to what I thought an American minister would have to expend at the principal Courts abroad. I told him what it had cost me at St. Petersburg, & what would be the probable cost at London & Paris.

The next time I met General Jackson, I said to him, "So you are going to send General Cass to Paris." His answer was, "How do you know that?" I said, "I can't tell you, but I believe it." His reply was, "It is true. I can no longer con-

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 398.



sent to do the duties both of President and Secretary of War. General Cass will decide nothing for himself, but comes to me constantly with great bundles of papers, to decide questions for him which he ought to decide for himself."

His resignation was the more remarkable on account of the cause he assigned for it. When my late message (of Dec., 1860) was read to the Cabinet before it was printed, General Cass expressed his unreserved & hearty approbation of it, accompanied by every sign of deep & sincere feeling. He had but one objection to it, & this was *that it was not sufficiently strong against the power of Congress to make war upon a State for the purpose of compelling her to remain in the Union*; & the denial of this power was made more emphatic & distinct upon his own suggestion.

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### TO GENERAL CASS.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, December 15, 1860.

SIR:

I have received your resignation of the office of Secretary of State with surprise and regret. After we had passed through nearly the whole term of the administration with mutual and cordial friendship and regard, I had cherished the earnest hope that nothing might occur to disturb our official relations until its end. You have decided differently; and I have no right to complain.

I must express my gratification at your concurrence with the general principles laid down in my late message, and your appreciation, "with warm sympathy, of its patriotic appeals and suggestions." This I value very highly; and I rejoice that we concur in the opinion that Congress does not possess the power under the Constitution to coerce a State by force of arms to remain in the Confederacy.

The question on which we unfortunately differ is that of ordering a detachment of the army and navy to Charleston, and is correctly stated in your letter of resignation. I do not intend

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; S. Ex. Doc. 7, 41 Cong. 1 Sess. 2; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 398.

to argue this question. Suffice it to say that your remarks upon the subject were heard by myself and the Cabinet with all the respect due to your high position, your long experience, and your unblemished character; but they failed to convince us of the necessity and propriety, under existing circumstances, of adopting such a measure. The Secretaries of War and of the Navy, through whom the orders must have issued to reinforce the forts, did not concur in your views; and whilst the whole responsibility for the refusal rested upon myself, they were the members of the Cabinet more directly interested. You may have judged correctly on this important question, and your opinion is entitled to grave consideration; but, under my convictions of duty, and believing as I do that no present necessity exists for a resort to force for the protection of the public property, it was impossible for me to have risked a collision of arms in the harbor of Charleston, and thereby defeated the reasonable hopes which I cherish of the final triumph of the Constitution and the Union.

I have only to add that you will take with you into retirement my heartfelt wishes that the evening of your days may be prosperous and happy.

Very respectfully yours,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: LEWIS CASS.

Editorial Note.—Among the Buchanan Papers in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, in a box labelled “Buchanan Papers—Nahum Capen, Black, & Brewster,” there is a draft of a letter, in Judge Black’s handwriting, accepting General Cass’s resignation as Secretary of State. This draft bears the following endorsement, in President Buchanan’s handwriting: “Dec: 15, 1860. The within answer to the resignation of General Cass was prepared by Judge Black; but I substituted for it the answer which was sent.” Judge Black’s draft reads as follows:

WASHINGTON, Dec. 15, 1860.

SIR:

I have received and read your letter of resignation with very great surprise. Nothing had ever occurred between us to prepare me for such a communication. All our official intercourse had been marked by unity of purpose, sentiment, and action from the beginning of my administration down to the moment when you announced your intention of retiring from it. Those necessary differences of opinion which always will arise on difficult questions between men of independent minds were uniformly adjusted in a manner which left our mutual confidence and respect undisturbed. That event in our political history which took place on the sixth of November, which has already produced so much distress and

which now threatens to plunge our country into total ruin, was interpreted alike by both of us, and by both its consequences were foreseen with equal regret. When that part of my late message which refers to the state of the Union was read to the Cabinet, your expressions of unreserved and hearty approval were accompanied by every sign of deep and sincere feeling. The only alteration afterwards made related to the power of Congress to make war upon a State for the purpose of compelling her to remain in the Union, and this denial of this power was made more emphatic and distinct upon your own suggestion. Such being our relations, it may well be supposed that I felt not only astonishment but pain when I suddenly found that you conceived yourself compelled to retire from the administration "at this critical juncture" in order to promote "unanimity" in its councils.

The want of unanimity to which you refer consisted solely in a difference of opinion between you and myself concerning the present policy and necessity of sending a larger number of troops to the forts in Charleston harbor. It is not disputed by either of us that in the absence of a real and imminent danger, actually threatening those places with an attack, it would be a wanton disregard of the public peace to station ships of war and troops in the midst of a highly excited community at the great risk of immediate collision & bloodshed. This is particularly true at a moment like the present, when several sympathising States are calling conventions on which the preservation or reconstruction of the Union may depend. Does any necessity exist for strengthening the forts which could justify us in encountering consequences so fatal to the very existence of the government? The point of difference is merely this: that I do not share in your apprehensions of an immediate attack on the Charleston forts. I cannot do so. Your views were heard with all the respect due to your high place, your long experience, and your unblemished character; but they failed to convince either myself or a majority of the Cabinet. For many reasons which I need not enumerate here, I did believe that no attack upon the forts was meditated by the authorities of South Carolina. I was and am now fully convinced that they are safer in their present condition than I could make them by the addition of the very small number of troops with which I have it in my power to reinforce them. Even if I am mistaken in this, I shall carry to my grave the consciousness that I have acted not only from the purest motives but upon the best information which I could possibly obtain.

You are very well aware that I have never by word or deed given the slightest encouragement to any movement in the South or the North which might lead to a disruption of the confederacy. The highest earthly object of my ambition is to preserve the Union of the States and to perpetuate the blessings of peace among all the people. It shall not be said of me that I wilfully provoked a civil war between my countrymen, or furnished to any of them even the semblance of an excuse for imbruing their hands in fraternal blood.

A movement of troops and ships is primarily a subject for the consideration of the War & Navy Departments. The Heads of both those Departments declined to favor your proposal. So much of the responsibility as did not necessarily fall upon them I cheerfully took upon myself. You will bear me witness that I never sought to throw the smallest portion of it on the Depart-

ment of State. I am not able to see a good reason for your resignation in a measure which was totally unconnected with your official duties except as a general adviser of the President. No administration could go on if each one of its members should refuse to serve whenever he found his advice rejected about those affairs which are placed under the charge of another.

It is quite new to me that you ever proposed to remove the Charleston Custom House from its present place to one of the forts or to appoint a new Collector. I do not doubt the truth of your statement, but I have no recollection of it nor is it remembered by the other members of the Cabinet whom I have interrogated on the subject. But if the proposition had been formally made and fully considered, it would certainly not have been adopted, for I regarded it as a settled matter that no such step would or legally could be taken until the impossibility of collecting the revenues in the ordinary way and at the proper place should be made manifest.

I have thought it right to give you this candid expression of my views.

I regret the necessity of parting from you even for the short remainder of my own term of service. But I cannot deny your right to decide for yourself. I can only add that you have my best wishes for your future prosperity & happiness, and that I am

Most respectfully yours, &c.

Among the Buchanan Papers in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania there is also a letter of Judge Black to George Ticknor Curtis. It was written during the month after Judge Black had published, in the *Philadelphia Press*, his memorandum on President Buchanan's draft of a reply to the South Carolina commissioners. The letter to Mr. Curtis is as follows:

BROCKIE, near YORK, PA.  
Sept. 26, 1881.

MY DEAR SIR—

The more I think over the facts that occurred between the election and the inauguration of Lincoln, the more difficulty I see you will encounter in dealing with that part of your subject; but with your sound habits of judicial thought and your determined impartiality, you will not fail. You can carry Mr. Buchanan on your shoulders straight through and set him in the place which he ought to occupy in the history of the country.

The charge of weakness applies only to his acts during that particular period. Previous to that he was charged with other and directly opposite faults: craftiness, and stubborn tenacity of will. That he had these qualities rather in excess is true enough, and that he brought them into this conflict with secessionism is certain. He was very self-confident and very determined; at the same time, he knew that the gravity of the situation required his utmost caution. There was one thing that he could not have foreseen: the success with which his life's life was lied away by the dirty hounds of the abolition party, or the utter desertion of him by men who had vowed their admiration and gratitude.

I think the worst trouble he got into, or at least the one which he in his subsequent life remembered with more regret than any other was caused by his resolution not to trust his constitutional advisers with his plans and modes of management. He overestimated his own power when he thought he could

get along without their assistance. He took a great deal of unshared responsibility. His consultations with outsiders were frequent and confidential, but they did not control him. His object was to gain information, and he got a great deal which he did not communicate to his cabinet. When things came to the worst and the conflict deepened, he discovered that this course would expose his administration to the danger of an explosion, compelling the cabinet to fly off in different directions, and he was literally forced to conform himself to the wishes of some of them. This was the crisis which came on the 29th of January [December]. Up to that day he had not the slightest apprehension of a rebellion in his own political family. The moment he ascertained that they had views of their own duty which they would not yield to his, he took the only course that was left; but this was not weakness, it was meeting a great crisis with intrepidity and sound judgment. I am not sure that his convictions were changed at the time, nor do I assert that his previous convictions were wrong, or that ours were right; I only say that in view of the difference it was wise and brave in him to harmonize his administration.

The relations between him and General Cass were peculiar. He never liked Cass in his life. They were rival candidates for the Presidency at a period of life when both of them were in the intensest fervor of their ambition. They never spoke evil of one another, but Buchanan learned to think unpleasantly of Cass's faults and was not kind to his virtues. His appointment as Secretary of State was forced upon Buchanan by what he regarded as a party necessity; the whole Democracy of the West demanding it as due to them. Buchanan was particularly strong as a diplomat. No man we have ever had understood our foreign relations as well as he did, and Cass, when he became Secretary of State, was too old to have very distinct views of his own or to carry out those of the President with much vigor; but he was the most honest, upright, patriotic gentleman that I have ever known, and his unfailing kindness of heart allowed the President sometimes to slight him without causing resentment.

I was very anxious that Cass should not resign; so I think were all the rest of the administration. He communicated his intention first to me. I was satisfied that Ledyard, his son-in-law, had simply got scared and communicated his fright to the General. After some talk with both of them, Cass drew up his resignation, showed it to me, and admitted that the object of his retiring was that he might be outside when the structure should begin to tumble. When I communicated to Mr. Buchanan that General Cass meant to resign, he said that he expected something of that kind; didn't regard it as a calamity, but rather as a good riddance. The General, after his resignation was sent in and accepted, repented himself, admitted that it was all wrong, and would have been glad to take it back if Buchanan had consented. Baker's statement that I tried to get Buchanan's consent is true. I suppose Mr. Baker got this fact from Mr. Buchanan himself, who knew everything which I have here stated and some others which he regarded as detracting from the force of General Cass's censure implied in the resignation. Any memorandum made by Mr. Buchanan is no doubt literally true as to matters of fact, but his temper towards General Cass should make us somewhat cautious about accepting his construction. He always felt, and felt sorely, that Cass's resignation gave to his enemies (the enemies of Buchanan) an



advantage over him which was not due in fairness and would not have existed if the whole truth had been known.

About the time when Mr. Buchanan began to make up his book, he wrote me for a statement of the facts connected with General Cass's resignation, which I supposed at the time that he intended to publish. I evaded it as well as I could, and I am afraid offended Mr. Buchanan, or at least dislocated his plan of treating the subject. I disliked very much to withhold anything that he wanted me to furnish, but I think now, as I thought then, that I was justified. General Cass's talks with me upon the subject were purely confidential. A revelation of Cass's weakness would have done his reputation much more harm than it would have done good to Buchanan's. Besides, I thought that Buchanan's pique against Cass was hardly fair; so I got out of it. What I have here written is not for the public, but intended for you; but if you shall hereafter, upon full reflection, come to the conclusion that an historical point is raised of sufficient importance to require a full discussion, I will help you to the whole truth as well as I can.

The plan of your work, on this subject, I take it for granted is not yet completely formed in your own mind. The possibility of being able to please any branch of the Buchanan family becomes more remote as you progress, but their judgment, if not their feelings, is well entitled to consideration. So far as there was any difference between Mr. Buchanan and his cabinet, the latter are entitled at your hands to nothing but stern justice. If you think they were in fault, you can say so, or you can pass them by in silence. As I said in my last letter to you, I am not sure that the latter course is practicable. Since the discussions which Davis's book has brought out, I do not know but you will have to go over the whole subject; but that is a thing which you must decide after a full consultation with the whole family.

You have not looked yet at certain statements of mine made in the controversy with Wilson. I think you ought to read them. I understood you to say that you had the pamphlet in your possession; otherwise I will send it to you.

I have received a serious hurt in the arm that was broken and dislocated twelve years ago, from which I suffer severe pain every time I move. I have dictated this letter from my bed, but I expect that I will be well enough to do all you want me to do before you come here. In the meantime, I am

Yours truly,

J. S. BLACK.

GEO. TICKNOR CURTIS, Esq.



TO MR. WHARTON.<sup>1</sup>*(Private & Confidential.)*

WASHINGTON, 16 Dec. 1860.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of yesterday, & cordially thank you for it. I have no word of encouragement to give you in regard to Southern secession. I still hope the storm may blow over; but there are no indications of it at present. On the contrary, the spirit is rapidly extending to States which were quiet a few weeks ago. My information is not encouraging from any quarter. The truth is that the people of the South are daily more & more confirmed in the opinion that the security of the domestic fireside requires a separation from the Northern States. Besides, they know that the world cannot do without their great staple, & that England & France must have it. The worst feature in the aspect of affairs is that they are rapidly losing their respect & attachment for the Constitution & the Union. The North are not yet impressed with a just sense of the danger. I have been warning them for years of what would finally be the result of their agitation; but Cassandra-like, all in vain.

I know of but one alternative which would save the Union, & that is an explanatory amendment to the Constitution, defining the rights of the South in exact accordance with the decision of the Supreme Court.

In the event of dissolution, God help Philadelphia & Pittsburg. They, & especially the latter, are odious to the South.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

GEORGE M. WHARTON, ESQUIRE.

P. S. I need not say that I consider secession to be revolution. This is the first letter I have penned upon the subject, & it is for yourself alone.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

MEMORANDUM.<sup>1</sup>

[December 17, 1860.]

On Monday, 17 December, 1860, both Mr. Thompson & Judge Black informed me that they had held conversations with General Cass on the subject of his resignation & that he had expressed a desire to withdraw it & return to the Cabinet. I gave this no encouragement. His purpose to resign had been known for several days, & his actual resignation had been prepared three days before it was delivered to me. The world knew all about it, & had he returned, the explanation would have been very embarrassing. Besides, I knew full well that his fears would have worried the administration as well as himself in the difficult times which were then upon us. His great error was that he would assume no responsibility which he could possibly avoid.

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FROM MR. WOODBURY.<sup>1</sup>

BOSTON, Dec. 17, 1860.

DEAR SIR:

I have been confined by illness for the last ten days, & take this first occasion of being able to write, to say to you how much I approve of your course regarding the position of affairs at Charleston, S. C. The first reinforcement sent there would be the signal of War, & you would be put in the position of initiating it and your successor be able to carry it on without responsibility for its origin. Your conduct is appreciated here by all sensible men; & from my sick bed I have used my voice continually in explaining to my friends its reason & prudence. Be not afraid of being either misunderstood or unappreciated for the signal prudence & wisdom of your course & your message.

The reactionary wave gathers strength day by day. If you can hold your ground as it is for a month, I believe we shall *revolutionize* Massachusetts. The peace policy and no coercion is the ground we are taking here.

I sent you an article in the *Courier*, signed *Langdon*, from my pen, on the right of Secession, & which perhaps you read, and now I am following it up by other articles on the peace policy. With much pains the Editors of the *Courier* have been got to head right, & are giving us now material aid. I repeat again, the reaction is tremendous here.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

If Genl. Cass left your side because he was old & infirm, I shall not lose my respect for him; as he was never a man for an emergency, even in Genl. Jackson's day.

If he has gone out because you would not precipitate a crisis by reinforcing Anderson, his lamp has gone out forever, & you are well relieved by the change.

I hope you will remember that when I shipped in the boat with you, I did it for *your entire term*; & call on me without hesitation for what you want of work or friendly service.

Be pleased to present my best respects to Miss Lane & believe [me]  
Truly & affectionately your friend,

CHAS. LEVI WOODBURY.

HON. JAMES BUCHANAN,  
President of the U. S.

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## TO GOVERNOR PICKENS.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON 18 December 1860.

MY DEAR SIR/

From common notoriety I assume the fact that the State of South Carolina is now deliberating on the question of seceding from the Union. Whilst any hope remains that this may be prevented, or even retarded so long as to afford the people of her sister States an opportunity to manifest their opinion upon the causes which have led to this proceeding, it is my duty to exert all the means in my power to avert so dread a catastrophe. I have, therefore, deemed it advisable to send to you the Hon: Caleb Cushing, in whose integrity, ability, & prudence I have full confidence, to hold communication with you on my behalf for the purpose of changing or modifying the contemplated action of the State in the manner I have already suggested.

Commending Mr. Cushing to your kind attention for his own sake as well as that of the cause, I remain

Very respectfully your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HIS EXCELLENCY FRANCIS W. PICKENS.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Another draft of this letter, unsigned and somewhat different in form, among the Buchanan Papers, is given in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 368.

TO MR. BENNETT.<sup>1</sup>*(Private and confidential.)*

WASHINGTON, 20 December, 1860.

MY DEAR SIR:

You wield the most powerful organ in the country for the formation of public opinion, and I have no doubt you feel a proportionate responsibility under the present alarming circumstances of the country. Every person here has his own remedy for existing evils, and there is no general assent to any proposition. Still, I believe the tendency is strong, and is becoming stronger every day, towards the Missouri Compromise, with the same protection to slaves south of 36° 30' that is given to other property. The South can lose no territory north of this line; because no portion of it is adapted to slave labor, whilst they would gain a substantial security within the Union by such a constitutional amendment. The Republicans have for some years manifested indignation at the repeal of this Compromise, and would probably be more willing to accept it than any other measure to guarantee the rights of the South. I have stated my favorite plan in the message, but am willing to abandon it at any moment for one more practicable and equally efficacious. If your judgment should approve it, you could do much by concentrating and directing your energies to this single point. My object, when I commenced to write, was simply to express my opinion that existing circumstances tended strongly toward the Missouri Compromise; but with pen in hand I shall make one or two other remarks.

I do not know whether the great commercial and social advantages of the telegraph are not counterbalanced by its political evils. No one can judge of this so well as myself. The public mind throughout the interior is kept in a constant state of excitement by what are called "telegrams." They are short and spicy, and can easily be inserted in the country newspapers. In the city journals they can be contradicted the next day; but the case is different throughout the country. Many of them are sheer falsehoods, and especially those concerning myself. I have

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Parts of this letter are printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 355, 431.

never enjoyed better health or a more tranquil spirit than during the past year. All our troubles have not cost me an hour's sleep or a meal's victuals, though I trust I have a just sense of my high responsibility. I weigh well and prayerfully what course I ought to adopt, and adhere to it steadily, leaving the results to Providence. This is my nature, and I deserve neither praise nor blame for it. Every person who served with me in the Senate in high party times would avouch the truth of this statement.

If the merchants of New York would sit down calmly and ask themselves to what extent they would be injured by the withdrawal of three or four cotton States from the Union, they would come to the conclusion that although the evils would be very great, yet they would not destroy the commercial prosperity of our great Western Emporium.

With my kindest and most cordial regards to Mrs. Bennett, I remain, very respectfully,

Your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

JAMES GORDON BENNETT, ESQ.

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## MEMORANDUM.<sup>1</sup>

[December 20, 1860.]

On Thursday morning, December 20th, 1860, Hamilton, late marshal of South Carolina, sent specially for this purpose, presented me a letter from Gov: Pickens, in the presence of Mr. Trescot, dated at Columbia, S. C., 17th December (Monday). He was to wait until this day (Friday afternoon) for my answer. The character of the letter will appear from the answer to it which I had prepared. Thursday night between 9 & 10 o'clock Mr. Trescot called upon me. He said that he had seen Messrs. Bonham & M'Queen of the South Carolina Delegation; —that they all agreed that this letter of Governor Pickens was

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 383-384.



in violation of the pledges which had been given by themselves not to make an assault upon the Forts, but leave them in statu quo until the result of an application of Commissioners to be appointed by the State was known;—that Gov: Pickens at Columbia could not have known of the arrangements. They, to wit, Bonham, M'Queen, & Trescot, had telegraphed to Pickens for authority to withdraw his letter.

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### DRAFT OF AN ANSWER

TO GOVERNOR PICKENS' DEMAND FOR THE SURRENDER OF  
FORT SUMTER.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, December 20, 1860.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I have received your favor of the 17th inst., by Mr. Hamilton. From it I deeply regret to observe that you seem entirely to have misapprehended my position, which I supposed had been clearly stated in my message. I have incurred, and shall incur, any reasonable risk within the clearly prescribed line of my executive duties to prevent a collision between the army and navy of the United States and the citizens of South Carolina in defence of the forts within the harbor of Charleston. Hence I have declined for the present to reinforce these forts, relying upon the honor of South Carolinians that they will not be assaulted whilst they remain in their present condition; but that commissioners will be sent by the convention *to treat with Congress* on the subject. I say with *Congress*, because, as I state in my message, "Apart from the execution of the laws, so far as this may be practicable, the Executive has no authority to decide

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis, in printing this draft (Life of Buchanan, II. 384), says: "The following is the draft of the answer to Governor Pickens which the President was writing with his own hand when he was notified that the Governor's letter was withdrawn. Of course the answer was not concluded or sent; but it shows with the utmost clearness that the President's position on the subject of secession was taken, and was not to be changed by any menace of 'consequences,' coming from those who were disposed to be, as they must be, the aggressors, if any attempt should be made to disturb the Federal Government in the possession of its forts."

what shall be the relations between the Federal Government and South Carolina. He has been invested with no such discretion. He possesses no power to change the relations heretofore existing between them, much less to acknowledge the independence of that State. This would be to invest a mere executive officer with the power of recognizing the dissolution of the confederacy among our thirty-three sovereign States. It bears no resemblance to the recognition of a foreign *de facto* government, involving no such responsibility. Any attempt to do this would, on my part, be a naked act of usurpation."

As an executive officer of the Government, I have no power to surrender to any human authority Fort Sumter or any of the other forts or public property in South Carolina. To do this, would on my part, as I have already said, be a naked act of usurpation. It is for Congress to decide this question, and for me to preserve the status of the public property as I found it at the commencement of the troubles.

If South Carolina should attack any of these forts, she will then become the assailant in a war against the United States. It will not then be a question of coercing a State to remain in the Union, to which I am utterly opposed, as my message proves, but it will be a question of voluntarily precipitating a conflict of arms on her part, without even consulting the only authorities which possess the power to act upon the subject. Between independent governments, if one possesses a fortress within the limits of another, and the latter should seize it without calling upon the appropriate authorities of the power in possession to surrender it, this would not only be a just cause of war, but the actual commencement of hostilities.

No authority was given, as you suppose, from myself, or from the War Department, to Governor Gist, to guard the United States arsenal in Charleston by a company of South Carolina volunteers. In this respect you have been misinformed. I have, therefore, never been more astonished in my life, than to learn from you that unless Fort Sumter be delivered into your hands, you cannot be answerable for the consequences.

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MEMORANDUM.<sup>1</sup>

[December 21, 1860.]

Friday morning, 10 o'clock, 21 December, Mr. Trescot called upon me with a Telegram, of which the following is a copy from that which he delivered to me.

Dec: 21, 1860. You are authorised & requested to withdraw my letter sent by Dr. Hamilton immediately.

F. W. P.

Mr. Trescot read to me from the same telegram that Governor Pickens had seen Mr. Cushing. The letter was accordingly withdrawn.

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TO MR. PHELPS.<sup>2</sup>

WASHINGTON, 22d December, 1860.

MY DEAR SIR,—

I have received your favor of the 20th inst., and rejoice to learn the change of public sentiment in your city. Still secession is far in advance of reaction, and several of the cotton States will be out of the Union before anything can be done to check their career. I think they are all wrong in their precipitation, but such I believe to be the fact.

It is now no time for resolutions of kindness from the North to the South. There must be some tangible point presented, and this has been done by Mr. Crittenden in his Missouri Compromise resolutions. Without pretending to speak from authority, I believe these would be accepted though not preferred by the South. I have no reason to believe that this is at present acceptable to the Northern senators and representatives, though the tendency is in that direction. They may arrive at this point when it will be too late.

I cannot imagine that any adequate cause exists for the

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 384.

<sup>2</sup> Turning on the Light, by Horatio King, p. 46.

extent and violence of the existing panic in New York. Suppose, most unfortunately, that the cotton States should withdraw from the Union; New York would still be the great city of this continent. We shall still have within the borders of the remaining States all the elements of wealth and prosperity. New York would doubtless be somewhat retarded in her rapid march; but, possessing the necessary capital, energy, and enterprise, she will always command a very large portion of the carrying trade of the very States which may secede. Trade cannot easily be drawn from its accustomed channels. I would sacrifice my own life at any moment to save the Union, if such were the will of God; but this great and enterprising brave nation is not to be destroyed by losing the cotton States, even if this loss were irreparable, which I do not believe, unless from some unhappy accident.

I have just received an abstract from the late census.

In the apportionment of representatives the State of New York will have as many in the House as Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, and South Carolina united. The latter State contains 296,422 free people and 408,905 slaves, and will be entitled in the next Congress to 4 representatives out of 233.

Why will not the great merchants of New York examine the subject closely and ascertain what will be the extent of their injuries, and accommodate themselves to the changed state of things?

If they will do this, they will probably discover they are more frightened than hurt. I hope the Treasury Note Loan may be taken at a reasonable rate of interest. No security can be better, in any event, whether the Cotton States secede or not. Panic in New York may, however, prevent, because panic has even gone to the extent of recommending that the great city of New York shall withdraw herself from the support of at least twenty-five millions of people and become a free city.

I had half an hour, and have scribbled this off in haste for your private use.

Your friend, very sincerely,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

ROYAL PHELPS, ESQ.

TO MR. STANTON.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, 24th December, 1860.

HON. EDWIN M. STANTON,  
Attorney General.

SIR:

I enclose to you thirteen drafts, bearing date at different periods from 13th September to the 13th December, 1860, both inclusive, drawn by Russell, Majors & Waddell on the Secretary of War, amounting in the whole to \$870,000, and by him accepted. I desire to have your opinion whether the Secretary of War had any authority under existing laws to accept such drafts, and whether their acceptance has been prohibited by any law.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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TO MR. BROWN.<sup>1</sup>*(Private.)*

WASHINGTON, 25th December, 1860.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have read with deep mortification your editorial this morning in which you take open ground against my message on the right of secession. I have defended you as long as I can against numerous complaints. You have a perfect right to be in favor of secession, and for this I have no just reason to complain. The difficulty is that the "Constitution" is considered my organ, and its articles subject me to the charge of insincerity and double dealing. I am deeply sorry to say that I must in some authentic form declare that the "Constitution" is not the organ of the administration.

Yr. friend very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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WM. M. BROWN, ESQ.

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

TO MR. HOLT.<sup>1</sup>

[December 28, 1860.]

MY DEAR SIR

I would thank you to call as soon as you reach the Department, and bring with you the draft of your letter to Messrs. Slidell and others respecting Fort Sumter.

Your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MR. HOLT.

Monday Morning 28 Dec: '61 [60].

FROM THE SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSIONERS.<sup>2</sup>

WASHINGTON, December 28, 1860.

SIR: We have the honor to transmit to you a copy of the full powers from the convention of the people of South Carolina, under which we are "authorized and empowered to treat with the government of the United States for the delivery of the forts, magazines, light-houses, and other real estate, with their appurtenances, within the limits of South Carolina; and also for an apportionment of the public debt, and a division of all other property held by the government of the United States, as agent of the confederated States of which South Carolina was recently a member; and generally to negotiate as to all other measures and arrangements proper to be made and adopted in the existing relations of the parties, and for the continuance of peace and amity between this commonwealth and the government at Washington."

In the execution of this trust it is our duty to furnish you, as we now do, with an official copy of the ordinance of secession, by which the State of South Carolina has resumed the powers she delegated to the government of the United States, and has declared her perfect sovereignty and independence.

It would also have been our duty to have informed you that we were ready to negotiate with you upon all such questions as are necessarily raised by the adoption of this ordinance; and that we were prepared to enter upon this negotiation with the earnest desire to avoid all unnecessary and hostile collision, and so to inaugurate our new relations as to secure mutual respect, general advantage, and a future of good will and harmony, beneficial to all the parties concerned.

But the events of the last twenty-four hours render such an assurance

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<sup>1</sup> Holt Papers, Library of Congress.

<sup>2</sup> H. Ex. Doc. 26, 36 Cong. 2 Sess. 5-6.



impossible. We came here the representatives of an authority which could at any time within the past sixty days have taken possession of the forts in Charleston harbor, but which, upon pledges given in a manner that we cannot doubt, determined to trust to your honor rather than to its own power. Since our arrival an officer of the United States, acting, as we are assured, not only without but against your orders, has dismantled one fort and occupied another, thus altering to a most important extent the condition of affairs under which we came.

Until those circumstances are explained in a manner which relieves us of all doubt as to the spirit in which these negotiations shall be conducted, we are forced to suspend all discussion as to any arrangements by which our mutual interests might be amicably adjusted.

And, in conclusion, we would urge upon you the immediate withdrawal of the troops from the harbor of Charleston. Under present circumstances they are a standing menace which renders negotiation impossible, and, as our recent experience shows, threatens speedily to bring to a bloody issue questions which ought to be settled with temperance and judgment.

We have the honor to be, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servants,

R. W. BARNWELL,  
J. H. ADAMS,  
JAMES L. ORR,  
Commissioners.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

#### THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

At a convention of the people of the State of South Carolina, begun and holden at Columbia, on the seventeenth day of December, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty, and thence continued by adjournment to Charleston, and there, by divers adjournments to the 20th of December in the same year:

*An ordinance to dissolve the union between the State of South Carolina and other States united with her, under the compact entitled "The Constitution of the United States of America."*—We, the people of the State of South Carolina, in convention assembled, do declare and ordain, and it is hereby declared and ordained: That the ordinance adopted by us in convention on the twenty-third day of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight, whereby the Constitution of the United States of America was ratified, and also all acts and parts of acts of the general assembly of this State ratifying amendments of the said Constitution, are hereby repealed; and that the Union now subsisting between South Carolina and other States, under the name of the "United States of America," is hereby dissolved.

Done at Charleston the twentieth day of December, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty.

D. F. JAMISON,  
Delegate from Barnwell and President of the Convention, and others.

Attest: BENJAMIN F. ARTHUR,  
Clerk of the Convention.

OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF STATE,  
CHARLESTON, S. C., December 22, 1860.

I do hereby certify that the foregoing ordinance is a true and correct copy, taken from the original on file in this office.

Witness my hand and the seal of the State.

[L. S.]

ISAAC H. MEANS,  
Secretary of State.

THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA, BY THE CONVENTION OF THE PEOPLE OF THE  
SAID STATE.

Whereas the convention of the people of the State of South Carolina, begun and holden at Columbia, on the seventeenth day of December, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty, and thence continued by adjournment to Charleston, did, by resolution, order: "That three commissioners, to be elected by ballot of the convention, be directed forthwith to proceed to Washington, authorized and empowered to treat with the government of the United States for the delivery of the forts, magazines, light-houses, and other real estate, with their appurtenances, within the limits of South Carolina; and also for an apportionment of the public debt, and for a division of all other property held by the government of the United States, as agent of the confederated States of which South Carolina was recently a member; and generally to negotiate as to all other measures and arrangements proper to be made and adopted in the existing relation of the parties, and for the continuance of peace and amity between this commonwealth and the government at Washington,"

And whereas the said convention did, by ballot, elect you to the said office of commissioners to the government at Washington: Now, be it known that the said convention, by these presents, doth commission you, Robert W. Barnwell, James H. Adams, and James L. Orr, as commissioners to the government at Washington, to have, to hold, and to exercise the said office, with all the powers, rights, and privileges conferred upon the same by the terms of the resolution herein cited.

Given under the seal of the State at Charleston, the twenty-second [L. S.] day of December, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty.

D. F. JAMISON, President.

ISAAC H. MEANS, Secretary of State.

ROBERT W. BARNWELL, JAMES H. ADAMS, and JAMES L. ORR.

Attest: B. F. ARTHUR,  
Clerk of the Committee.

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TO THE SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSIONERS.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, December 31, 1860.

GENTLEMEN :

I have had the honor to receive your communication of 28th inst., together with a copy of your "full powers from the Convention of the people of South Carolina," authorizing you to treat with the Government of the United States on various important subjects therein mentioned, and also a copy of the ordinance bearing date on the 20th inst., declaring that "the union now subsisting between South Carolina and other States, under the name of 'the United States of America,' is hereby dissolved."

In answer to this communication, I have to say that my position as President of the United States was clearly defined in the message to Congress of the 3d instant. In that I stated that, "apart from the execution of the laws, so far as this may be practicable, the Executive has no authority to decide what shall be the relations between the Federal Government and South Carolina. He has been invested with no such discretion. He possesses no power to change the relations heretofore existing between them, much less to acknowledge the independence of that State. This would be to invest a mere executive officer with the power of recognizing the dissolution of the confederacy among our thirty-three sovereign States. It bears no resemblance to the recognition of a foreign *de facto* government, involving no such responsibility. Any attempt to do this would, on his part, be a naked act of usurpation. It is, therefore, my duty to submit to Congress the whole question in all its bearings."

Such is still my opinion, and I could, therefore, meet you only as private gentlemen of the highest character, and I was quite willing to communicate to Congress any proposition you might have to make to that body upon the subject. Of this you were well aware.

It was my earnest desire that such a disposition might be made of the whole subject by Congress, who alone possess the

<sup>1</sup> H. Ex. Doc. 26, 36 Cong. 2 Sess. 8-12. In Jefferson Davis's Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government, I. 592, the date of this letter is erroneously given as December 30.

power, as to prevent the inauguration of a civil war between the parties in regard to the possession of the Federal forts in the harbor of Charleston; and I therefore deeply regret that, in your opinion, "the events of the last twenty-four hours render this impossible." In conclusion, you urge upon me "the immediate withdrawal of the troops from the harbor of Charleston," stating that, "under present circumstances, they are a standing menace which renders negotiation impossible, and, as our recent experience shows, threatens speedily to bring to a bloody issue questions which ought to be settled with temperance and judgment."

The reason for this change in your position is that, since your arrival in Washington, "an officer of the United States, acting, as we (you) are assured, not only without but against your (my) orders, has dismantled one fort and occupied another, thus altering to a most important extent the condition of affairs under which we (you) came." You also allege that you came here "the representatives of an authority which could at any time within the past sixty days have taken possession of the forts in Charleston harbor, but which, upon pledges given in a manner that we (you) cannot doubt, determined to trust to your (my) honor rather than to its own power."

This brings me to a consideration of the nature of those alleged pledges, and in what manner they have been observed. In my message of the 3d of December last, I stated, in regard to the property of the United States in South Carolina, that it "has been purchased for a fair equivalent 'by the consent of the legislature of the State, for the erection of forts, magazines, arsenals,' etc., and over these the authority 'to exercise exclusive legislation' has been expressly granted by the Constitution to Congress. It is not believed that any attempt will be made to expel the United States from this property by force; but if in this I should prove to be mistaken, the officer in command of the forts has received orders to act strictly on the defensive. In such a contingency, the responsibility for consequences would rightfully rest upon the heads of the assailants."

This being the condition of the parties on Saturday, 8th December, four of the representatives from South Carolina called upon me and requested an interview. We had an earnest conversation on the subject of these forts, and the best means of preventing a collision between the parties, for the purpose of sparing the effusion of blood. I suggested, for prudential reasons, that

it would be best to put in writing what they said to me verbally. They did so accordingly, and on Monday morning the 10th instant, three of them presented to me a paper signed by all the representatives of South Carolina, with a single exception, of which the following is a copy:

TO HIS EXCELLENCY JAMES BUCHANAN,  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES:

In compliance with our statement to you yesterday, we now express to you our strong convictions that neither the constituted authorities, nor any body of the people of the State of South Carolina, will either attack or molest the United States forts in the harbor of Charleston, previously to the action of the convention, and, we hope and believe, not until an offer has been made, through an accredited representative, to negotiate for an amicable arrangement of all matters between the State and the Federal Government, provided that no reinforcements shall be sent into those forts, and their relative military *status* shall remain as at present.

JOHN MCQUEEN,  
WILLIAM PORCHER MILES,  
M. L. BONHAM,  
W. W. BOYCE,  
LAWRENCE M. KEITT.

WASHINGTON, December 9, 1860.

And here I must, in justice to myself, remark that, at the time the paper was presented to me, I objected to the word "provided," as it might be construed into an agreement, on my part, which I never would make. They said that nothing was further from their intention; they did not so understand it, and I should not so consider it. It is evident they could enter into no reciprocal agreement with me on the subject. They did not profess to have authority to do this, and were acting in their individual character. I considered it as nothing more, in effect, than the promise of highly honorable gentlemen to exert their influence for the purpose expressed. The event has proved that they have faithfully kept this promise, although I have never since received a line from any one of them or from any member of the convention on the subject. It is well known that it was my determination, and this I freely expressed, not to reinforce the forts in the harbor and thus produce a collision, until they had been actually attacked, or until I had certain evidence that they were about to be attacked. This paper I received most cordially, and considered it as a happy omen that peace might



still be preserved, and that time might thus be gained for reflection. This is the whole foundation for the alleged pledge.

But I acted in the same manner as I would have done had I entered into a positive and formal agreement with parties capable of contracting, although such an agreement would have been, on my part, from the nature of my official duties, impossible.

The world knows that I have never sent any reinforcements to the forts in Charleston harbor, and I have certainly never authorized any change to be made "in their relative military *status*."

Bearing upon this subject, I refer you to an order issued by the Secretary of War, on the 11th instant, to Major Anderson, but not brought to my notice until the 21st instant. It is as follows:

Memorandum of verbal instructions to Major Anderson, First Artillery, commanding Fort Moultrie, South Carolina:

You are aware of the great anxiety of the Secretary of War that a collision of the troops with the people of this State shall be avoided, and of his studied determination to pursue a course with reference to the military force and forts in this harbor, which shall guard against such a collision. He has, therefore, carefully abstained from increasing the force at this point, or taking any measures which might add to the present excited state of the public mind, or which would throw any doubt on the confidence he feels that South Carolina will not attempt by violence to obtain possession of the public works, or to interfere with their occupancy. But, as the counsel and acts of rash and impulsive persons may possibly disappoint these expectations of the Government, he deems it proper that you shall be prepared with instructions to meet so unhappy a contingency. He has, therefore, directed me, verbally, to give you such instructions.

You are carefully to avoid every act which would needlessly tend to provoke aggression and for that reason you are not, without evident and imminent necessity, to take up any position which could be construed into the assumption of a hostile attitude; but you are to hold possession of the forts in this harbor, and, if attacked, you are to defend yourself to the last extremity. The smallness of your force will not permit you, perhaps, to occupy more than one of the three forts; but an attack on, or an attempt to take possession of, either one of them will be regarded as an act of hostility, and you may then put your command into either of them which you may deem most proper to increase its power of resistance. You are also authorized to take similar defensive steps whenever you have tangible evidence of a design to proceed to a hostile act.

D. C. BUELL, Assistant Adjutant General.  
FORT MOULTRIE, SOUTH CAROLINA, December 11, 1860.

This is in conformity to my instructions to Major Buell.

JOHN B. FLOYD, Secretary of War.



These were the last instructions transmitted to Major Anderson before his removal to Fort Sumter, with a single exception in regard to a particular which does not, in any degree, affect the present question. Under these circumstances, it is clear that Major Anderson acted upon his own responsibility and without authority, unless, indeed, he had "tangible evidence of a design to proceed to a hostile act" on the part of the authorities of South Carolina, which has not yet been alleged. Still he is a brave and honorable officer, and justice requires that he should not be condemned without a fair hearing.

Be this as it may, when I learned that Major Anderson had left Fort Moultrie and proceeded to Fort Sumter, my first promptings were to command him to return to his former position, and there to await the contingencies presented in his instructions. This could only have been done, with any degree of safety to the command, by the concurrence of the South Carolina authorities. But before any steps could possibly have been taken in this direction, we received information, dated on the 28th instant, that "the Palmetto flag floated out to the breeze at Castle Pinckney, and a large military force went over last night (the 27th) to Fort Moultrie." Thus the authorities of South Carolina, without waiting or asking for any explanation, and doubtless believing, as you have expressed it, that the officer had acted not only without, but against my orders, on the very next day after the night when the removal was made, seized by a military force two of the three Federal forts in the harbor of Charleston, and have covered them under their own flag, instead of that of the United States. At this gloomy period of our history, startling events succeed each other rapidly. On the very day (the 27th instant) that possession of these two forts was taken, the Palmetto flag was raised over the Federal custom house and post office in Charleston; and on the same day every officer of the customs—collector, naval officer, surveyor, and appraisers—resigned their offices. And this, although it was well known, from the language of my message, that, as an executive officer, I felt myself bound to collect the revenue at the port of Charleston under the existing laws. In the harbor of Charleston we now find three forts confronting each other, over all of which the Federal flag floated only four days ago; but now over two of them this flag has been supplanted, and the Palmetto flag has been substituted in its stead. It is under all

these circumstances that I am urged immediately to withdraw the troops from the harbor of Charleston, and am informed that without this negotiation is impossible. This I cannot do; this I will not do. Such an idea was never thought of by me in any possible contingency. No allusion had ever been made to it in any communication between myself and any human being. But the inference is that I am bound to withdraw the troops from the only fort remaining in the possession of the United States in the harbor of Charleston, because the officer there in command of all the forts thought proper, without instructions, to change his position from one of them to another. I cannot admit the justice of any such inference.

At this point of writing I have received information by telegram from Captain Humphreys, in command of the arsenal at Charleston, that "it has to-day (Sunday, the 30th) been taken by force of arms." Comment is needless. It is estimated that the property of the United States in this arsenal was worth half a million of dollars.

After this information, I have only to add that, while it is my duty to defend Fort Sumter, as a portion of the public property of the United States, against hostile attacks, from whatever quarter they may come, by such means as I may possess for this purpose, I do not perceive how such a defence can be construed into a menace against the city of Charleston.

With great personal regard, I remain yours very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HONS. ROBERT W. BARNWELL,  
JAMES H. ADAMS,  
JAMES L. ORR.

Editorial Note.—The following letter of the Hon. Joseph Holt to Mr. J. Buchanan Henry, relating to the preparation of the letter to the South Carolina Commissioners, should be read at this place:

"WASHINGTON, D. C., May 26, 1884.

"J. BUCHANAN HENRY, ESQ.

"DEAR SIR: I am in receipt of your letter calling my attention to the following extract from a forthcoming volume of political history by the Hon. James G. Blaine:

"Judge Black's change, however important to his own fame, would prove comparatively fruitless, unless he could influence Mr. Buchanan to break with the men who had been artfully using the power of his administration

to destroy the Union. The opportunity and the test came promptly. The new "sovereign, free, and independent government of South Carolina" sent commissioners to Washington to negotiate for the surrender of the national forts and the transfer of the national property within her limits. *Mr. Buchanan prepared an answer to their request which was compromising to the honor of the Executive and perilous to the integrity of the Union.* Judge Black took a decided and irrevocable stand against the President's position. He advised Mr. Buchanan that upon the basis of that fatal concession to the disunion leaders, he could not remain in his Cabinet. It was a sharp issue, but was soon adjusted. Mr. Buchanan gave way, and permitted Judge Black and his associates, Holt and Stanton, to frame a reply for the Administration.'

"You desire my opinion particularly on the statement that 'Mr. Buchanan prepared an answer to their request which was compromising to the honor of the Executive and perilous to the integrity of the Union.' These words must certainly seem strange and harsh to those who knew Mr. Buchanan well; and had Mr. Blaine been in possession of all the information bearing on the action thus arraigned, he could not have expressed his estimate of it in terms so severe as those he has employed. Mr. Buchanan had so guarded his personal honor through a long life, that at its close there was found upon it neither stain nor trace of stain; with equal solicitude and, in my belief, with equal success, did he watch over the honor of the great office he held. Of all the illustrious men who had occupied that seat of power before him, none had been less capable than he of lowering its dignity or impairing its integrity. Equally incapable was he of saying or doing aught which, in his judgment, could prove in the remotest degree 'perilous to the Union.' The letter alluded to, and which was prepared by the President's own hand, no longer exists, and can therefore be spoken of only by way of general recollection. When it was read on the evening of the 29th of December, dissatisfaction was evidenced by the loyal members of the Cabinet through suggestions conversationally made. Nothing occurred on the occasion which could be called a discussion, nor can I recall that the President manifested any dissent from the views thus made known to him. He listened, and then quietly and kindly—as was his habit—took what had been said under consideration. The objections thus arising did not go to any doctrinal conclusions reached by the President, but were rather structural and verbal in their character, contemplating the omission of certain passages, and seeking by amendment of the framework and phraseology of the paper—while announcing the President's views with frankness and commanding force—to enforce them by a distinctness of utterance which would render any mischievous misinterpretation of them by the Commissioners or others impossible. The acknowledged importance of the communication necessarily imposed the obligation of this caution and this anxiety to protect the President from all harmful implications as to the opinions actually held by him.

"After this Cabinet meeting Judge Black formulated his objections to the President's letter in a 'Memorandum,' which has been preserved, and was given by him to the public, through a correspondent of the *Philadelphia Press*, in which journal it appeared on the 7th of August, 1881. It is scarcely

possible to read this 'Memorandum' without being impressed by the highly excited apprehensions under which it was obviously written, and by the apparent severity of its criticism. The judge did nothing by halves, and in the fervor of his loyalty to the Union, he commented not only on what had been evolved in the Cabinet, but much more, elaborating and intensifying his strictures by the vigor of speech for which he was so distinguished. On reading the following day the objections as thus arrayed, to his draught of an answer to the Commissioners, the President unhesitatingly directed that an answer should be prepared in accordance with the changes desired, and this was accordingly done. From this recital it would seem that too much gravity has been assigned to this consultation of the President with his Cabinet, and to the modification of an official paper resulting from it. The whole proceeding followed the usages of the Presidential office, and in availing himself of the counsels of his Cabinet the President sacrificed neither the independence of his judgment nor his dignity.

"It has been stated that Judge Black said to the President, and to Secretary Toucey as well, that he could not remain in the Cabinet if the proposed answer to the Commissioners remained unchanged. His highly impulsive temperament, and the supreme solicitude under which we were acting, may have led him to say so much, but if so, it was unknown to me at the time. Certainly no such avowal was made to myself, nor did I make any such to him or others, and of this he has left record evidence. In a letter from him to Mr. Schell, under date of 6th of August, 1863, he said: 'Neither Mr. Stanton nor Mr. Holt ever spoke to the President about resigning, upon any contingency whatever, before the incoming of the new Administration.' Remembering now the absence of any manifestation of dissent on the part of the President, and the readiness with which he yielded to the changes proposed, there would seem to have been little ground or opportunity for so extreme a declaration as has been imputed to Judge Black. While unable at this late day to recall all the details of the answer to the Commissioners drafted by the President, my recollection is distinct that it contained nothing, properly understood—that is, as the President himself understood it, and wished it to be understood by others—which could be held to be 'compromising to the honor of the Executive and perilous to the integrity of the Union.' The desire for its partial reconstruction did not spring from the slightest doubt or fear felt as to the profound earnestness of the President's loyalty; for those by whom he was immediately surrounded, and upon whose ears the pulsations of his heart fell, knew him to be as devoted to the Union as were the brave men who afterwards shouldered their muskets in its defence. The object of the changes sought was simply to render the answer more effective in accomplishing an object which the President and the loyal members of his Cabinet had equally at heart, and for which they were laboring with equal zeal.

"But a single sentence of the proposed answer has been preserved, and it is found in Judge Black's 'Memorandum' in these words: 'Coercing a State by force of arms to remain in the Confederacy, a power which I do not believe the Constitution has conferred on Congress.' Now, there was nothing new in this opinion. It had been declared by the President in his annual message, and as we learn from Mr. Seward, it was afterwards

'willingly' accepted as true' by Mr. Lincoln himself. It meant that the general government could not rightfully, with its army and navy, make war upon a State, as it would against a foreign nation, for the purpose of obliging such State to continue in the Union. While strict constructionists of the Constitution readily deduced this dogma from that instrument and its history, it was practically little more than a barren abstraction when considered in connection with the further belief held firmly by the President, to the effect that the general government could properly employ its whole civil and military power in coercing obedience to the Constitution and the laws made under it *on the part of the people of the States*. Such obedience by the people, being compelled or yielded, there would seem to be no more danger of a State leaving the Union than there is of a shadow forsaking the substance from which it is projected. Standing, however, as these words did, without the accompaniment of the supplementary and explanatory belief mentioned, they were liable from their generality to misconstruction, and to be seized upon—as indeed they had already been—and made the basis of a claim that, logically, the Administration must entertain, if not active sympathy with, at least a measure of toleration for secession, which, in point of fact, the President and his loyal counsellors abhorred; for, though euphemistically spoken of as only a political heresy, it was clearly but treason in disguise, and could bear only the fruits of death for the nation. It was thought advisable, therefore, that the words quoted should be omitted altogether from the answer to the Commissioners, which was done.

"The assertion will scarcely be controverted that the President and his Cabinet should be held responsible, not for discussions among themselves in their council chamber, not for suggestions, verbal or written, made to each other in the course of a confidential consultation upon their official duties, but that such responsibility must, in all fairness, rest solely on the conclusions finally reached and acted on by them. The conclusions arrived at in this case were fully set forth in the President's answer to the Commissioners, under date of the 31st of December, 1860. It has been published, and needs no justification at my hands. It speaks for itself, and will abide any scrutiny to which it may be subjected.

"I may say, further, though not directly in response to your letter, that the reproaches heaped upon Mr. Buchanan during the closing months of his administration and afterwards, were due mainly to the conciliatory policy, or as he himself termed it, 'a policy of defence, not aggression,' which he felt it his duty to assume towards the South. This policy was honorable to him in every way, and its wisdom was fully illustrated by the events that followed. But there arose in those days patriots, fiery and blatant, who misunderstood and misrepresented him, stigmatizing his moderation as timidity, and claiming that the flash of gunpowder was the only light that should be shed on the vexed political questions of the hour. Perilous conjunctures in public affairs have not unfrequently been prolific in charlatan zealots of this class. Fabius was hooted at Rome, but Cannæ was his vindication. This policy was very far from being inspired by fear. It sprang from a noble hope—the result of some remaining trust in human nature—that the growing revolt, alarming as it was, would be suppressed before war had reddened its hands in the blood of our people. In one of his



messages to Congress at that period, Mr. Buchanan said: 'I am one of those who will never despair of the republic.' And again he said: 'If the political conflict were to end in civil war, it was my determined purpose not to commence it, nor even to furnish an excuse for it by an act of this Government.' He did not realize then—few did—as all now do, that even at that moment the conspiracy had attained proportions beyond the control of moral suasion, and that the treason confronting the nation, with the cancer of slavery, of which it was the accursed progeny, could be extirpated only by the surgery of the sword. He might have acted far otherwise than he did. He might have blustered and threatened, but this would have been incompatible with his personal character and the dignity of his exalted office, and would have excited only derision with the secessionists. He might have refused to correspond with the Commissioners from South Carolina, even as private citizens—and it was only as such that he did communicate with them—but he chose to hear before he struck. He might have ordered the guns of Sumter to open upon the fort or forts being constructed around it for its ultimate destruction, or upon Moultrie, but in doing this he would have inaugurated war, which Congress alone is competent to do. He would have inaugurated war, too, at the very moment when the purse and sword of the nation's power were held by the hands of a Congress practically disloyal, and when our little army, utterly insignificant for such a conflict was scattered from the centre to the circumference of the republic. Would this have been wise or statesman-like or patriotic? Such a step could have drawn after it only disaster and humiliation, and an imperishable condemnation of the rashness and folly which had prompted it. Such a step, too, would have given to the secessionists the very vantage-ground which the shot upon, instead of from Sumter afterwards gave to the nation—a vantage-ground that proved the fulcrum on which rested the lever of the moral and physical forces that filled the ranks of our armies and carried the country in triumph through the carnage of so many battle-fields.

"This conciliatory policy, so patriotic and beneficent in its spirit, accomplished but little in the interests of peace in the South, for, unhappily, madness ruled the hour, and the voice of moderation could no more exorcise the traitorous passions which had been aroused than strains of music could quiet the waves of a raging sea. Still, in the presence of all the discouragements encountered, Mr. Buchanan was impelled to persist in his policy by a painful sense of his own helplessness. Though the Chief Executive of a great and brave people, he was absolutely fettered, so far as any effective endeavor for the preservation of the Union was concerned, by lamentably defective laws, conceived in a morbid jealousy of executive power and in a dread of the invasion of the 'rights of the States'—to use a hackneyed and much-abused term—and none knew this better than the secessionists themselves. Our political forefathers, though wise in their generation, do not appear to have been sufficiently acquainted with the capabilities of crime to foresee that possibly at some future day even the authorities of a State might be found in guilty complicity with a conspiracy against the national life, and hence no provision whatever was made to meet so humiliating an emergency in our history. The land was filled with heroic and true men, ready and eager to 'march to the music of the Union,' but the President



had no power to call them to the field without an act of Congress authorizing him, and would have exposed himself to impeachment had he attempted to do so. There was money enough in the Treasury, but its keys were held in the clutch of a Congress virtually disloyal. In vain did he represent to Congress the imperilled condition of the country and the steady advance of the rebellion, calling upon it 'as the only human tribunal, under Providence, possessing the power to declare war, or to authorize the employment of military force in all cases contemplated by the Constitution.' But under all the appeals made to the honor, the sense of duty and patriotism of Congress, that body remained stolidly dumb and contemptuously indifferent, thus affording daily and hourly encouragement to the rebellion. Though charged under the Constitution with the duty of protecting the Union, that body, although the air at Washington was filled with the mutterings of a treason whose forces were being openly organized in the South, refused to give the President authority to call out the militia either to quell the rebellion or recapture the forts, arsenals, and other public property which had been seized by the insurgents. And when, in the performance of an imperative duty and exercise of a clear right, he had succeeded in collecting a small body of soldiers at Washington, for the purpose of resisting its capture by a rebel *coup de main*, then believed to be impending, and thus securing the peaceful inauguration of the incoming President, the House of Representatives, though perfectly aware of the object of the action taken, passed a resolution demanding to know by what authority and to what end this had been done—a resolution which, though parliamentary in its language, was insolent and mocking in its spirit, and intended to be so, and seemed to treat as an offence against the House of Representatives the endeavor of the President to protect the National Capital from a rebel raid. When the collector at the port of Charleston resigned his office in the interests of the rebellion, and the President, wishing to continue the collection of the revenue there, nominated his successor, a Republican Senate refused to act upon the nomination, thus declining to co-operate with and support the Executive in his conscientious effort to execute the laws. Fearful must be the indictment to which that Congress will have to respond at the bar of history. Why this torpor and faithlessness? Was there unwillingness felt in any quarter for a Democratic Administration to have the glory of subduing the rebellion before it had filled the land with its crimes? Could there be an injustice more unworthy of a great and enlightened people than that which would condemn the President for seeking by forbearance and conciliation to stay the rebellion, when all physical power to resist its progress had been deliberately denied him?

"Situating as he was, the President might have called on the governors and people of the loyal States for a volunteer force with which to recover the forts, arsenals, etc. of which the rebels had possessed themselves, and to suppress the insurrection, and this appeal might have been responded to. Such a proceeding, however, on his part, would have been utterly lawless, and the more so, as Congress—the depository under the Constitution, of all needful powers for the repression of treasonable assaults upon the republic—was in session at the time, sitting with folded arms in one end of the Capitol, and with ill-disguised sympathy with the rebellion in the other. Even,

however, could so extreme and revolutionary a measure have succeeded, thoughtful men must now rejoice that it was not resorted to, since, had the rebellion been crushed in its earlier stages, it is clear enough that slavery—the source of all our woes—would have remained intact, and thus a wound, so long threatening our national existence, would have been healed over, leaving the poisoned shaft still rankling in its depths. But Mr. Buchanan was eminently a conscientious man. He had an oath registered on high to execute the laws, not to violate them. He was in his nature infinitely above that vulgar herd of perjured usurpers and cut-throats who have crimsoned the annals of the ages by their crimes, but to whom, alas, the world has bowed its neck and knee, and obsequiously erected its monuments.

“The true animus of Mr. Buchanan towards the rebellion cannot be judged aright without bearing in mind that, while his policy of forbearance and conciliation was, under the circumstances mentioned, maintained to the close of his administration, yet, when the clash of arms was heard, he yielded to none in the ardor of his wishes for the success of our flag, and in the inflexible determination with which he insisted the war for the Union should be prosecuted. In a published letter to the Hon. Horatio King, who had been a member of his Cabinet, he wrote under the date of September 18th, 1861, as follows:

“‘I think I can perceive in the public mind a more fixed, resolute, and determined purpose than ever to prosecute the war to a successful termination, with all the men and means in our power. Enlistments are now proceeding much more rapidly than a few weeks ago, and I am truly glad of it. The time has passed for offering compromises and terms of peace to the seceded States. We well know that under existing circumstances they would accept of nothing less than a recognition of their independence which it is impossible we should grant. There is a time for all things under the sun; but surely this is not the moment for paralyzing the arm of the National Administration by a suicidal conflict among ourselves, but for bold, energetic, and decided action.’

“Mr. Buchanan, unhappily, was not spared long enough to witness his own complete vindication, which must surely come and, indeed, in part, has come already. The time is at hand when others will have to bear the sins and shortcomings of which it has been so cruelly sought to make him the scape-goat. ‘Carrying,’—to use his own touching words—as he did, ‘to the grave the consciousness of having meant well for his country,’ I rejoice to believe that he was cheered by a confident anticipation of the final triumph of his reputation over all the aspersions that had assailed it. Still, he must have laid down his harassed and faithful life with a stinging sense of the wrong he had suffered at the hands of those whom he had served so well, and it is sad, indeed, to realize that for this no atonement to him can now be made. Yet no history written, however sincerely or unconsciously, under the influence of an estimate of his administration, born of and filtered to us through the fierce passions of the war, can long harm his memory. As the fevered pulse of that period has calmed, that estimate has steadily declined in vitality, and is rapidly losing its hold upon the public mind. Injustice cannot live always, and it is in the providence of God that the truth, however deeply buried, must sooner or later have a resurrection. The his-

torian of the future, seated above the wrangle of partisan strife and the shadows of still lingering calumnies, will, amid the sunlight of a passionless impartiality, pronounce a judgment that must assure to this illustrious statesman and patriot an unsullied fame, and this judgment, I doubt not, coming generations will unhesitatingly accept.

"Very sincerely yours,

"J. HOLT."

Mr. George Ticknor Curtis, in writing his *Life of Buchanan*, in 1882, refers to a "cabinet crisis" as having taken place on the 29th of December, and his language seems to indicate that he had derived from some source the impression that Messrs. Black, Holt, and Stanton were on the point of resigning. In this relation he says: "It might be an interesting inquiry how far a 'cabinet crisis' had become necessary. But of this the gentlemen who composed the cabinet were entitled to judge, because their personal honor and patriotism were involved in the question of their remaining in the cabinet, if they believed that the President was about to change his policy. They appear to have at first supposed that the President, after South Carolina had adopted an ordinance of secession, was about to make such a change in his policy as would virtually reverse his position, and would finally lead to an admission of the right of secession, a result which would inevitably destroy him and his administration. In this it is certain that they were mistaken. The President had not contemplated any such change in his position. I am justified in stating this strongly." (*Life of Buchanan*, II. 382-383.)

Had Mr. Holt's letter been written before Buchanan's biography was prepared, it is obvious that Mr. Curtis's impressions as to the situation in the cabinet on the 29th of December would have been essentially modified. No member of the cabinet was more loyal to the Union than Mr. Holt; and a "crisis," produced by a cause so grave as the supposition that the President was about to reverse his position and acknowledge the claim of secession, could hardly have existed without his knowledge.

In connection with what has been given above, the three following letters—two from Mr. Holt, of March 25 and April 1, 1884, respectively, and one from Mr. Horatio King, of April 1, 1884, are of interest:

"WASHINGTON, March 25th, 1884.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I am in receipt of your note of 22d inst. Shall be very glad, indeed, if you succeed in obtaining the papers giving an account of *all* the interviews of Judge Black which have been reported. If furnished to me they shall be promptly returned.

After reading the chapter in its entirety, as given in the *World*, it seems quite clear that the extract enclosed to me had reference, not to the letter of the 6th of Feby., but to that of the 31st Decr. preceding, & to the *original draft of that letter* as prepared by the President & by him submitted for the consideration of the Cabinet. Now the question which has arisen upon these papers has been so fully treated by Mr. Curtis, in his *Life*, that

I do not quite see what additional light I could shed upon it. If, however, after examining what he has written, you still think it desirable that I should speak as to any point involved in the question, & will indicate it, I will do so without hesitation. It will always be gratifying to me to contribute any information in my possession that can assist in placing the loyalty of Mr. Buchanan's action in its true light. I may add that, under the influence, possibly, of something said by Judge Black which has not come under my notice, Mr. Curtis has been led to assign to this passage in the history of the cabinet a gravity to which I have never regarded it as entitled.

“Very sincerely yours,

“J. HOLT.

“J. BUCHANAN HENRY, ESQ.”

“WASHINGTON, April 1st, 1884.

“MY DEAR SIR,

“I am in receipt of your favor of 27th ult., for which I thank you, as I do for the enclosures, which are all the papers that I shall need. I regret to be obliged to leave for the West in a few days, & will probably not be able to return before the 1st of May. My reply to your letter will be necessarily delayed until that time; but as you do not propose making any immediate use of it I trust the delay will be no inconvenience to you. I am much obliged for the copy sent me of your article which appeared in the *World* of the 18th ult., & have read it with great interest. It is incisive & forcible, & has doubtless taken the edge off Mr. Blaine's accusation. It seems to me, however, that the time has quite gone by when such a charge could make any serious impression on the public to the prejudice of your Uncle's reputation; still it should be met & overthrown.

“Very sincerely yours,

“J. HOLT.

“J. BUCHANAN HENRY, ESQ.”

“WASHINGTON, April 1, 1884.

“MY DEAR SIR:

“Your letter of 30th ult. is received, as was also the *World* containing your letter in correction of Mr. Blaine's erroneous statements. When I wrote my short article which was published in the *Sunday Herald* of the 23d ult., I had not seen Mr. Blaine's 10th chapter, but quoted what I took to be his language from a synopsis I found in the *Washington Post*. It is not quite exact, as I have since observed by a perusal of that chapter, but the sentiment is nearly the same.—It seems that this is what he wrote: ‘If Mr. Buchanan had possessed the unconquerable will of Jackson, or the stubborn courage of Taylor, he could have changed the history of the revolt against the Union.’

“Now, while I feel sure that, had matters been pressed to open hostilities at any time before the 4th of March, 1861, the rebels would have had possession of this city, there is undoubtedly a pretty general feeling—a belief I may say—not confined to the republican party, that if Mr. Buchanan had not followed Judge Black's advice in going into the discussion about ‘coercing’ a State, and had proclaimed a determination to put down the first attempt at

open rebellion, the revolt might have been prevented. It was not, nor is it, easy to show to the common people the difference between coercing a State and enforcing obedience to the laws by the people of a State. I remember how it struck me at the time, and that I said (recklessly perhaps) that I would not stop to discuss either laws or constitution, since I knew there must be the right and power in the government to preserve its own life.

"I had a talk last week of over an hour with Genl. Holt, who, I was glad to see, is taking a lively interest in the defence of President Buchanan. He is now the only man living who can best speak in his behalf, and I earnestly hope we may soon hear from him under his own name. I wish the first draft of President Buchanan's letter to the South Carolina commissioners had been preserved, for I have scarcely a doubt that it would have put a stop to all this caviling on that subject.

"Very truly yours,

"HORATIO KING.

"J. BUCHANAN HENRY, ESQ.

"Garden City, N. Y.

"P. S. I have accepted an invitation to read before the L. I. His. Soc'y at Brooklyn my acc't of the battle of Bladensburg and capture of this city, next Tuesday ev'g, the 8th April. I intend to be at Gen. H. C. King's, 91 Pineapple St., the even'g before, where I should be glad to meet you."

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1861.

## MESSAGE

ON A TREATY WITH VENEZUELA.<sup>1</sup>

[January 2, 1861.]

TO THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES:

I transmit to the Senate for its consideration, with a view to ratification, a treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation, and for the surrender of fugitive criminals, between the United States and the Republic of Venezuela, signed at Caracas on the 27th of August last.

A similar treaty was concluded on the 10th July, 1856, was submitted to the Senate, and was, by a resolution of that body, approved, with an amendment, on the 10th March, 1857. Before this amendment could be laid before the Government of Venezuela for acceptance, a new minister of the United States

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<sup>1</sup> Senate Executive Journal, XI. 243.



was accredited to that Government. Meantime the attention of this Government had been drawn to the disadvantage which would result to our citizens residing in Venezuela if the second article of the treaty of 1856 were permitted to go into effect—the “pecuniary equivalent” for exemption from military duty being an arbitrary and generally an excessive sum. In view of this fact, it was deemed preferable to instruct our new minister to negotiate a new treaty, which should omit the objectionable second article and also the few words of the twenty-eighth article which had been stricken out by the Senate.

With these changes, and with the addition of the last clause to the twenty-seventh article, the treaty is the same as that already approved by the Senate.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON, January 2d, 1861.

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### SPECIAL MESSAGE

ON THE CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE SOUTH CAROLINA  
COMMISSIONERS.<sup>1</sup>

[January 8, 1861.]

TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

At the opening of your present session I called your attention to the dangers which threatened the existence of the Union. I expressed my opinion freely concerning the original causes of these dangers, and recommended such measures as I believed would have the effect of tranquillizing the country and saving it from the peril in which it had been needlessly and most unfortunately involved. These opinions and recommendations I do not propose now to repeat. My own convictions upon the whole subject remain unchanged.

The fact that a great calamity was impending over the nation was even at that time acknowledged by every intelligent citizen. It had already made itself felt throughout the length and breadth

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<sup>1</sup> H. Ex. Doc. 26, 36 Cong. 2 Sess. See letter to the South Carolina Commissioners, Dec. 31, 1860, *supra*, in reply to their letter of Dec. 28, *supra*.



of the land. The necessary consequences of the alarm thus produced were most deplorable. The imports fell off with a rapidity never known before, except in time of war, in the history of our foreign commerce; the treasury was unexpectedly left without the means which it had reasonably counted upon to meet the public engagements; trade was paralyzed; manufactures were stopped; the best public securities suddenly sunk in the market; every species of property depreciated more or less; and thousands of poor men, who depended upon their daily labor for their daily bread, were turned out of employment.

I deeply regret that I am not able to give you any information upon the state of the Union which is more satisfactory than what I was then obliged to communicate. On the contrary, matters are still worse at present than they then were. When Congress met, a strong hope pervaded the whole public mind that some amicable adjustment of the subject would speedily be made by the representatives of the States and of the people, which might restore peace between the conflicting sections of the country. That hope has been diminished by every hour of delay; and as the prospect of a bloodless settlement fades away, the public distress become more and more aggravated. As evidence of this it is only necessary to say that the treasury notes authorized by the act of 17th December last were advertised, according to the law, and that no responsible bidder offered to take any considerable sum at par at a lower rate of interest than twelve per cent. From these facts it appears that, in a government organized like ours, domestic strife, or even a well-grounded fear of civil hostilities, is more destructive to our public and private interests than the most formidable foreign war.

In my annual message I expressed the conviction, which I have long deliberately held, and which recent reflection has only tended to deepen and confirm, that no State has a right by its own act to secede from the Union, or throw off its federal obligations at pleasure. I also declared my opinion to be that, even if that right existed and should be exercised by any State of the confederacy, the executive department of this government had no authority under the Constitution to recognize its validity by acknowledging the independence of such State. This left me no alternative, as the chief executive officer under the Constitution of the United States, but to collect the public revenues and to

protect the public property so far as this might be practicable under existing laws. This is still my purpose. My province is to execute, and not to make, the laws. It belongs to Congress, exclusively, to repeal, to modify, or to enlarge their provisions, to meet exigencies as they may occur. I possess no dispensing power.

I certainly had no right to make aggressive war upon any State and I am perfectly satisfied that the Constitution has wisely withheld that power even from Congress. *But the right and the duty to use military force defensively against those who resist the federal officers in the execution of their legal functions, and against those who assail the property of the federal government, is clear and undeniable.*

But the dangerous and hostile attitude of the States towards each other has already far transcended and cast in the shade the ordinary executive duties already provided for by law, and has assumed such vast and alarming proportions as to place the subject entirely above and beyond executive control. The fact cannot be disguised that we are in the midst of a great revolution. In all its various bearings, therefore, I commend the question to Congress, as the only human tribunal, under Providence, possessing the power to meet the existing emergency. To them, exclusively, belongs the power to declare war, or to authorize the employment of military force in all cases contemplated by the Constitution; and they alone possess the power to remove grievances which might lead to war, and to secure peace and union to this distracted country. On them, and on them alone, rests the responsibility.

The Union is a sacred trust left by our revolutionary fathers to their descendants; and never did any other people inherit so rich a legacy. It has rendered us prosperous in peace and triumphant in war. The national flag has floated in glory over every sea. Under its shadow American citizens have found protection and respect in all lands beneath the sun. If we descend to considerations of purely material interest, when, in the history of all time, has a confederacy been bound together by such strong ties of mutual interest? Each portion of it is dependent on all, and all upon each portion, for prosperity and domestic security. Free trade throughout the whole supplies the wants of one portion from the productions of another, and

scatters wealth everywhere. The great planting and farming States require the aid of the commercial and navigating States to send their productions to domestic and foreign markets, and to furnish the naval power to render their transportation secure against all hostile attacks.

Should the Union perish in the midst of the present excitement we have already had a sad foretaste of the universal suffering which would result from its destruction. The calamity would be severe in every portion of the Union, and would be quite as great, to say the least, in the southern as in the northern States. The greatest aggravation of the evil, and that which would place us in the most unfavorable light both before the world and posterity is, as I am firmly convinced, that the secession movement has been chiefly based upon a misapprehension at the south of the sentiments of the majority in several of the northern States. Let the question be transferred from political assemblies to the ballot-box, and the people themselves would speedily redress the serious grievances which the south have suffered. But, in Heaven's name, let the trial be made before we plunge into armed conflict upon the mere assumption that there is no other alternative. Time is a great conservative power. Let us pause at this momentous point and afford the people, both north and south, an opportunity for reflection. Would that South Carolina had been convinced of this truth before her precipitate action! I, therefore, appeal through you to the people of the country to declare in their might that the Union must and shall be preserved by all constitutional means. I most earnestly recommend that you devote yourselves, exclusively, to the question how this can be accomplished in peace. All other questions, when compared with this, sink into insignificance. The present is no time for palliations; action, prompt action, is required. A delay in Congress to prescribe or to recommend a distinct and practical proposition for conciliation may drive us to a point from which it will be almost impossible to recede.

A common ground on which conciliation and harmony can be produced is surely not unattainable. The proposition to compromise by letting the north have exclusive control of the territory above a certain line, and to give southern institutions protection below that line, ought to receive universal approbation. In itself, indeed, it may not be entirely satisfactory; but when the

alternative is between a reasonable concession on both sides and a destruction of the Union, it is an imputation upon the patriotism of Congress to assert that its members will hesitate for a moment.

Even now the danger is upon us. In several of the States which have not yet seceded the forts, arsenals and magazines of the United States have been seized. This is by far the most serious step which has been taken since the commencement of the troubles. This public property has long been left without garri-sons and troops for its protection, because no person doubted its security under the flag of the country in any State of the Union. Besides, our small army has scarcely been sufficient to guard our remote frontiers against Indian incursions. The seizure of this property, from all appearances, has been purely aggressive, and not in resistance to any attempt to coerce a State or States to remain in the Union.

At the beginning of these unhappy troubles I determined that no act of mine should increase the excitement in either section of the country. If the political conflict were to end in a civil war, it was my determined purpose not to commence it, nor even to furnish an excuse for it by any act of this government. My opinion remains unchanged, that justice as well as sound policy requires us still to seek a peaceful solution of the questions at issue between the north and the south. Entertaining this conviction, I refrained even from sending reinforcements to Major Anderson, who commanded the forts in Charleston harbor, until an absolute necessity for doing so should make itself apparent, lest it might unjustly be regarded as a menace of military coercion, and thus furnish, if not a provocation, at least a pretext for an outbreak on the part of South Carolina. No necessity for these reinforcements seemed to exist. I was assured by distinguished and upright gentlemen of South Carolina that no attack upon Major Anderson was intended, but that, on the contrary, it was the desire of the State authorities, as much as it was my own, to avoid the fatal consequences which must eventually follow a military collision.

And here I deem it proper to submit, for your information, copies of a communication dated December 28, 1860, addressed to me by R. W. Barnwell, J. H. Adams, and James L. Orr, "Commissioners" from South Carolina, with the accompanying documents, and copies of my answer thereto, dated December 31.

In further explanation of Major Anderson's removal from Fort Moultrie to Fort Sumter, it is proper to state that, after my answer to the South Carolina "Commissioners," the War Department received a letter from that gallant officer, dated December 27, 1860, the day after this movement, from which the following is an extract:

"I will add, as my opinion, that many things convinced me that the authorities of the State designed to proceed to a hostile act."

Evidently referring to the orders, dated December 11, of the late Secretary of War.

"Under this impression, I could not hesitate that it was my solemn duty to move my command from a fort which we could not probably have held longer than forty-eight or sixty hours to this one, where my power of resistance is increased to a very great degree."

It will be recollected that the concluding part of these orders was in the following terms:

"The smallness of your force will not permit you, perhaps, to occupy more than one of the three forts; but an attack on, or attempt to take possession of either one of them, will be regarded as an act of hostility, and you may then put your command into either of them which you may deem most proper to increase its power of resistance. You are also authorized to take similar defensive steps whenever you have tangible evidence of a design to proceed to a hostile act."

It is said that serious apprehensions are, to some extent, entertained, in which I do not share, that the peace of this District may be disturbed before the 4th of March next. In any event, it will be my duty to preserve it, and this duty shall be performed.

In conclusion, it may be permitted to me to remark that I have often warned my countrymen of the dangers which now surround us. This may be the last time I shall refer to the subject officially. I feel that my duty has been faithfully, though it may be imperfectly, performed; and whatever the result may be, I shall carry to my grave the consciousness that I at least meant well for my country.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON CITY, January 8, 1861.



FROM MR. THOMPSON.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jany. 8th, 1861.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY JAMES BUCHANAN, PRESIDENT U. S.

SIR: It is with extreme regret I have just learned that additional troops have been ordered to Charleston. This subject has been frequently discussed in Cabinet Council; and when on Monday night, 31st of December ult., the orders for reinforcements to Fort Sumter were countermanded, I distinctly understood from you, that no order of the kind would be made without being previously considered and decided in Cabinet. It is true that on Wednesday, Jany. 2nd, this subject was again discussed in Cabinet, but certainly no conclusion was reached, and the War Department was not justified in ordering reinforcements without something [more] than was then said.

I learn, however, this morning, for the first time, that the steamer *Star* of the West sailed from New York on last Saturday night with Two Hundred and fifty men under Lieut. Bartlett, bound for Fort Sumter.

Under these circumstances I feel myself bound to resign my commission as one of your constitutional advisers into your hands.

With high respect, your obdt. svt.

J. THOMPSON.

TO MR. THOMPSON.<sup>2</sup>

WASHINGTON, 9th January, 1861.

SIR: I have received and accepted your resignation on yesterday of the office of Secretary of the Interior.

On Monday evening, 31 December, 1860, I suspended the orders which had been issued by the War and Navy Departments to send the *Brooklyn* with reinforcements to Fort Sumter. Of this I informed you on the same evening. I stated to you my reason for this suspension, which you knew, from its nature, would be speedily removed. In consequence of your request, however, I promised that these orders should not be renewed "without being previously considered and decided in Cabinet."

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 401.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 402.



This promise was faithfully observed on my part. In order to carry it into effect, I called a special Cabinet meeting on Wednesday, 2 January, 1861, in which the question of sending reinforcements to Fort Sumter was amply discussed both by yourself and others. The decided majority of opinions was against you. At this moment the answer of the South Carolina "Commissioners" to my communication to them of the 31st December was received and read. It produced much indignation among the members of the Cabinet. After a further brief conversation I employed the following language: "It is now all over, and reinforcements must be sent." Judge Black said, at the moment of my decision, that after this letter the Cabinet would be unanimous, and I heard no dissenting voice. Indeed, the spirit and tone of the letter left no doubt on my mind that Fort Sumter would be immediately attacked, and hence the necessity of sending reinforcements thither without delay.

Whilst you admit "that on Wednesday, January 2d, this subject was again discussed in Cabinet," you say, "but certainly no conclusion was reached, and the War Department was not justified in ordering reinforcements without something [more] than was then said." You are certainly mistaken in alleging that "no conclusion was reached." In this your recollection is entirely different from that of your four oldest colleagues in the Cabinet. Indeed, my language was so unmistakable, that the Secretaries of War and the Navy proceeded to act upon it without any further intercourse with myself than what you heard or might have heard me say. You had been so emphatic in opposing these reinforcements, that I thought you would resign in consequence of my decision. I deeply regret that you have been mistaken in point of fact, though I firmly believe honestly mistaken. Still, it is certain you have not the less been mistaken.

Yours very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. JACOB THOMPSON.

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FROM THE VIRGINIA SENATORS.<sup>1</sup>

SENATE CHAMBER, U. S., January 9th, 1861.

TO THE HON. JAMES BUCHANAN,  
President of the United States.

SIR/

Intelligence has reached us, from sources entitled to credit, that under the direction of the War Department arms are being removed from some of the Arsenals in Virginia and sent into States north or west of it.

We further remark disquiet and uneasiness in the public mind of our State, under impressions derived from apparently well founded rumor that additional troops are to be sent to the Forts, Arsenals, or Navy Yard in Virginia.

We are satisfied that if the arms or munitions now in the State are removed, or additional troops are sent to the points indicated, it will, in the present condition of the country, be looked at in the most serious light by the authorities and people of Virginia.

We shall be gratified therefore to learn, if you feel at liberty to inform us, that no orders of the character alluded to have been issued—or if otherwise, that they will be revoked.

We respectfully ask an early reply, and are with great respect

Your Mo. Obdt. &c. &c. &c.

J. M. MASON.

R. M. T. HUNTER.

FROM MR. THOMPSON.<sup>2</sup>

WASHINGTON CITY, Jany. 10th, 1861.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY JAMES BUCHANAN, PRESIDENT OF U. S.

DEAR SIR: In your reply to my note of 8th Inst., accepting my resignation, you are right when you say that "you (I) had been so emphatic in opposing these reinforcements that I (you) thought you (I) would resign in consequence of my decision." I came to the Cabinet on Wednesday Jany. 2nd, with the full expectation I would resign my commission before I left your Council Board; and I know you do not doubt that my action would have been promptly taken had I understood on that day that you had decided that "reinforcements must now be sent." For more than forty days, I have regarded the display of a military force in Charleston or along the Southern

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 403.

Coast by the United States as tantamount to war. Of this opinion you & all my colleagues of the Cabinet have been frankly advised. Believing that such would be the construction of an order for additional troops, I have been anxious and have used all legitimate means to save you and your administration from precipitating the Country into an inevitable conflict, the end of which no human being could foresee. My counsels have not prevailed, troops have been sent, and I hope yet that a kind Providence may avert the consequences I have apprehended and that peace be maintained.

I am now a private citizen and as such I am at liberty to give expression to my private feelings towards you personally.

In all my official intercourse with you though often overruled, I have been treated with uniform kindness and consideration.

I know your patriotism, your honesty and purity of character, & admire your high qualities of head & heart. If we can sink all the circumstances attending this unfortunate order for reinforcements, on which though we may differ, yet I am willing to admit that you are as conscientious as I claim to be, you have ever been frank, direct, and confiding in me. I have never been subjected to the first mortification, or entertained for a moment the first unkind feeling. These facts determined me to stand by you & your Administration as long as there was any hope left that our present difficulties could find a peaceful solution. If the counsels of some members of your Cabinet prevail, I am utterly without hope.

Every duty you have imposed on me has been discharged with scrupulous fidelity on my part, and it would give me infinite pain even to suspect that you are not satisfied.

Whatever may be our respective futures, I shall ever be your personal friend, and shall vindicate your fame and your Administration, of which I have been a part, and shall ever remember with gratitude the many favors and kindnesses heretofore shown to me & mine.

I go hence to make the destiny of Mississippi my destiny. My life, fortune, and all I hold most dear shall be devoted to her cause. In doing this, I believe, before God, I am serving the ends of truth & justice & good Government.

Now as ever, your personal friend,

J. THOMPSON.

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## TO MESSRS. MASON AND HUNTER.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, 10 January, 1861.

GENTLEMEN:

In answer to your communication of yesterday, I have to assure you that I have just seen the Secretary of War, and he assures me that no arms have been removed from any of the

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

arsenals of Virginia, nor have additional troops been sent to any of the forts, arsenals, or the Navy Yard in Virginia, except the Company which has been sent to Harper's Ferry, on the request of the Superintendent. The Brooklyn has been despatched to Charleston outside of the harbor, with orders to the officer in command of the troops on board of the Star of the West to proceed with them immediately to Fortress Monroe, rendering them any assistance that may be necessary. She is instructed not to attempt to pass the bar of the harbor, but if the troops shall have gone into Fort Sumter, she is immediately to return to Norfolk without them. If she finds them outside of the harbor, she is to return with them.

Yours very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. J. M. MASON,  
R. M. T. HUNTER.

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TO MR. THOMPSON.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON 11 January 1861.

MY DEAR SIR/

Without referring to any recent political question, your favor of yesterday has afforded me the highest degree of satisfaction. You know that for many years I have entertained a warm regard for you, & this has been greatly increased by our official & personal intercourse since you became a member of my Cabinet. No man could have more ably, honestly, & efficiently performed the various & complicated duties of the Interior Department than yourself, & it has always been my pride & pleasure to express this opinion on every suitable occasion. I regret extremely that the troubles of the times have rendered it necessary for us to part; but whatever may be your future destiny, I shall ever feel a deep interest in your welfare and happiness.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: JACOB THOMPSON.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 404.

FROM MR. THOMAS.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, D. C., January 11th, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:

It has not been in my power, as you are aware, to agree with you and with a majority of your constitutional advisers, in the measures which have been adopted in reference to the present condition of things in South Carolina; nor do I think it at all probable that I shall be able to concur in the views which you entertain, so far as I understand them, touching the authority, under existing laws, to enforce the collection of the Customs at the Port of Charleston.

Under such circumstances, after mature consideration, I have concluded that I cannot longer continue in your Cabinet without embarrassment to you, and an exposure of myself to the just criticism of those who are acquainted with my opinions upon the subject. I therefore deem it proper to tender my resignation of the Commission I now hold as Secretary of the Treasury, to take effect when my successor shall be appointed and qualified. In doing so, I avail myself of the occasion to offer you the assurance of the high respect and regard which, personally, I entertain for you, and with which I have the honor to be

Your friend &amp; Obdt. Servt.

PHILIP F. THOMAS.

THE PRESIDENT.

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TO MR. HOLT.<sup>2</sup>

SATURDAY 12 Jan. '61.

MY DEAR SIR

I desire to see the Secretary of the Navy, Lieutenant General Scott, and yourself together some time to-day. I mention 12 o'clock, though any other hour would suit me equally well.

Your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MR. HOLT.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 404.

<sup>2</sup> Holt Papers, Library of Congress.

TO MR. THOMAS.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON 12 January 1860 [1861].

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your letter of yesterday resigning the office of Secretary of the Treasury, to take effect when your successor shall be appointed & qualified.

I very much regret that circumstances, in your opinion, have rendered it necessary. Without referring to those circumstances, I am happy to state, in accepting your resignation, that during the brief period you have held this important office, you have performed its duties in a manner altogether satisfactory to myself.

Wishing you health, prosperity, & happiness, I remain  
Very respectfully your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: PHILIP F. THOMAS.

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MESSAGEON THE RESIGNATION OF MR. FLOYD.<sup>2</sup>

WASHINGTON, January 15, 1861.

TO THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES:

In compliance with the resolution of the Senate passed on the 10th instant, requesting me to inform that body, if not incompatible with the public interest, "whether John B. Floyd, whose appointment as Secretary of War was confirmed by the Senate on the 6th of March, 1857, still continues to hold said office, and, if not, when and how said office became vacant; and further, to inform the Senate how and by whom the duties of said office are now discharged; and if an appointment of an acting or provisional Secretary of War has been made, how, when, and by what authority it was so made, and why the fact of said appointment has not been communicated to the Senate," I have

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 405.

<sup>2</sup> S. Doc. 2, 36 Cong. 2 Sess.



to inform the Senate that John B. Floyd, the late Secretary of the War Department, resigned that office on the 29th day of December last,<sup>1</sup> and that on the 1st day of January instant Joseph Holt was authorized by me to perform the duties of the said office until a successor should be appointed or the vacancy filled. Under this authority the duties of the War Department have been performed by Mr. Holt from the day last mentioned to the present time.

The power to carry on the business of the Government by means of a provisional appointment when a vacancy occurs is expressly given by the act of February 13, 1795, which enacts "That in case of vacancy in the office of Secretary of State, Secretary of the Treasury, or of the Secretary of the Department of War, or of any officer of either of said Departments whose appointment is not in the head thereof, whereby they can not perform the duties of their said respective offices, it shall be lawful for the President of the United States, in case he shall think it necessary, to authorize any person or persons, at his discretion, to perform the duties of the said respective offices until a successor be appointed or such vacancy be filled: *Provided*, That no one vacancy shall be supplied in manner aforesaid for a longer period than six months."

It is manifest that if the power which this law gives had been withheld, the public interest would frequently suffer very serious detriment. Vacancies may occur at any time in the most important offices, which can not be immediately and permanently filled in a manner satisfactory to the appointing power. It was wise to make a provision which would enable the President to avoid a total suspension of business in the interval, and equally wise so to limit the Executive discretion as to prevent any serious abuse of it. This is what the framers of the act of 1795 did, and neither the policy nor the constitutional validity of their law has been questioned for sixty-five years.

The practice of making such appointments, whether in a vacation or during the session of Congress, has been constantly followed during every Administration from the earliest period of the Government, and its perfect lawfulness has never, to my

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Floyd's resignation is printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 409. See, also, *id.* 410, for an apologetic letter of Mr. Floyd to President Buchanan, of Dec. 30, 1860.

knowledge, been questioned or denied. Without going back further than the year 1829, and without taking into the calculation any but the chief officers of the several Departments, it will be found that provisional appointments to fill vacancies were made to the number of 179, from the commencement of General Jackson's Administration to the close of General Pierce's. This number would probably be greatly increased, if all the cases which occurred in the subordinate offices and bureaus were added to the count. Some of them were made while the Senate was in session; some which were made in vacation were continued in force long after the Senate assembled. Sometimes, the temporary officer was the commissioned head of another Department, sometimes a subordinate in the same Department. Sometimes the affairs of the Navy Department have been directed *ad interim* by a commodore and those of the War Department by a general. In most, if not all, of the cases which occurred previous to 1852, it is believed that the compensation provided by law for the officer regularly commissioned was paid to the person who discharged the duties *ad interim*. To give the Senate a more detailed and satisfactory view of the subject, I send the accompanying tabular statement, certified by the Secretary of State, in which the instances are all set forth in which provisional as well as permanent appointments were made to the highest executive offices from 1829 nearly to the present time, with their respective dates.

It must be allowed that these precedents, so numerous and so long continued, are entitled to great respect, since we can scarcely suppose that the wise and eminent men by whom they were made could have been mistaken on a point which was brought to their attention so often. Still less can it be supposed that any of them wilfully violated the law or the Constitution.

The lawfulness of the practice rests upon the exigencies of the public service, which require that the movements of the Government shall not be arrested by an accidental vacancy in one of the Departments; upon an act of Congress expressly and plainly giving and regulating the power; and upon long and uninterrupted usage of the Executive, which has never been challenged as illegal by Congress.

This answers the inquiry of the Senate so far as it is necessary to show "how and by whom the duties of said office are now discharged." Nor is it necessary to explain further than

I have done "how, when, and by what authority" the provisional appointment has been made. But the resolution makes the additional inquiry "*why* the fact of said appointment has not been communicated to the Senate."

I take it for granted that the Senate did not mean to call for the reasons upon which I acted in performing an Executive duty, nor to demand an account of the motives which governed me in an act which the law and the Constitution left to my own discretion. It is sufficient, therefore, for that part of the resolution to say that a provisional or temporary appointment like that in question is not required by law to be communicated to the Senate, and that there is no instance on record where such communication ever has been made.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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## MEMORANDUM OF A CONVERSATION.<sup>1</sup>

[January 16, 1861.]

Wednesday afternoon, at 4 P. M., 16 January, 1860 [1861], Senator Clay [of Alabama] called. He began by assigning reasons why I should withdraw Major Anderson & his troops from Fort Sumter. I told him that it was quite out of the question for me to hold verbal communications on this subject. Although I relied implicitly upon his honor, yet there would be mistakes with the best intentions. He concurred in this opinion; but said he would never repeat to any human being what had passed between him & me. I thought, however, I would leave no room for doubt on the important point, & I told him I would not under any circumstances withdraw the troops from Fort Sumter. He spoke of the inauguration of civil war in Charleston as a dreadful calamity. I answered that the troops were there in a small number, in the possession of a Fort which I firmly believed

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 453.

belonged to the United States, to act purely on the defensive, & if assaulted by the authorities of South Carolina, on them would rest the exclusive responsibility of commencing civil war. I believed South Carolina still to be a part of the Confederacy.

He then (& I am not certain he did not mention it before) said he had come from the seceding Senators to suggest to me some plan by which the effusion of human blood might be spared at Charleston. I told him any proposition of this kind must be reduced to writing—that without this I could not consider it. Still, he went on & said there was a truce agreed upon so long as Col: Hayne was here. I told him I had understood there had been. He said they wanted him to remain a few days & submit a proposition to the Government of South Carolina to agree that Major Anderson should be placed in his former position,—that the Government should have free access to him, that he should buy all the provisions he wanted in Charleston, & that he should not be disturbed if I would not send him additional reinforcements. I again said that I could not take any proposition into consideration unless it were reduced to writing. He said he understood this perfectly. But [he] went on to say that the truce might be extended until the meeting at Milledgeville, or even till the 4th March. I told him that the truce would continue until Col: Hayne left here, which I supposed would be in a few days; that Lieutenant Hall had been informed by Col: Hayne that he might go to see his sick sister in New York, provided he was back on Friday evening. I told him I could say nothing further on the subject of the truce, nor could I express any opinion on the subjects to which he had referred unless the proposition were reduced to writing & presented to me in a distinct form. He said I need be under no apprehensions as to the security of the Fort. He had just come from Jefferson Davis, who said it could not be taken; and Lars Anderson had informed him that Major Anderson said he did not require reinforcements. He got up & said he would go to those who had sent him, & it would be for them to decide upon the proposition. I then said to him emphatically that Col: Hayne could not possibly be authorised to send any propositions to Charleston until they had been first submitted to myself & Cabinet & agreed to. He said certainly not, that this was a necessary preliminary. I repeated again that I could not even consider any verbal propo-

sition. He said he understood that perfectly; that he would not have anything to do with it himself without this. He then asked me when the Cabinet would meet. He believed it was to-morrow, & they would not have time to come to an understanding so soon. I said that the regular day was Friday. He said that would give them time, & so he went away.

In the course of conversation I told him that I felt as much anxiety to prevent a collision & spare the effusion of blood as any man living; but this must be done in consistency with the discharge of all my duties as laid down in my annual message & my late special message. That I could not & would not withdraw Major Anderson from Fort Sumter.

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TO MR. HOLT.<sup>1</sup>

[Jan. 22, 1861.]

MY DEAR SIR,

I send the enclosed memorandum. I had an interview with Captain Rodier and Lieutenant Lipscomb. I have no doubt that company deserves and will deserve well. Mr. Ould speaks highly of them. Is there any reason why the officers should not be commissioned? They say there is not a man among them who would not defend the peace of the District until the last.

Yr. friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MR. HOLT.

Thursday Morning.

MEMORANDUM.

Anderson Rifles, Company A.

Captain C. H. Rodier, Lieutenant David Mason, Edwin Krouse, 3d George B. Lipscomb—Officers elected 9 January—100 Men.

Captain Rodier & Lieutenant Lipscomb call to inquire why the Officers have not received their Commissions.

Scott Rifles—22 Jan: '61.

Captain Jas. Owens Berry.

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<sup>1</sup> Holt Papers, Library of Congress.

## MESSAGE

ON THE ISTHMUS OF CHIRIQUI.<sup>1</sup>

[January 22, 1861.]

TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

I herewith transmit to the House of Representatives a communication from the Secretary of the Navy, with accompanying reports of the persons who were sent to the Isthmus of Chiriqui to make the examinations required by the 5th section of the act making appropriations for the naval service, approved June 22, 1860.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON, January 22, 1861.

## MESSAGE

ON FOREIGN VESSELS AT CHARLESTON.<sup>2</sup>

[January 24, 1861.]

TO THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES:

In compliance with the resolution of the Senate of the 19th instant, requesting a copy of correspondence between the department of State and ministers of foreign powers at Washington in regard to foreign vessels in Charleston, I transmit a report from the Secretary of State, and the documents by which it was accompanied.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON, January 24, 1861.

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<sup>1</sup> H. Ex. Doc. 41, 36 Cong. 2 Sess.<sup>2</sup> S. Ex. Doc. 5, 36 Cong. 2 Sess.



MEMORANDUM.<sup>1</sup>

[January 24, 1861.]

Thursday Morning, January 24, 1861. Mr. Tyler called & delivered me his credentials, & we had a conference. I foreshadowed to him the principal points of my message as delivered.<sup>2</sup> He preferred that I should enter into the arrangement myself. We discussed this question for some time, & I was decided that I had no power. He then expressed an apprehension that my message might precipitate action in Congress. I told him I thought not. I sent for Gov: Bigler that he might consult him on this point; but Gov: Bigler had gone to the Senate.

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TO EX-PRESIDENT TYLER.<sup>3</sup>

25 January, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I have just received your note. The orders were given to the Brooklyn, I believe, on Monday or Tuesday last, certainly before your arrival in this City. She goes on an errand of mercy & relief. If she had not been sent, it would have been an abandonment of our highest duty. Her movements are in no way connected with South Carolina.

Your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HIS EXCELLENCY JOHN TYLER.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 472.

<sup>2</sup> This refers to the message which was sent to Congress, Jan. 28, 1861, *infra*, on the Virginia peace resolutions.

<sup>3</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 406. President Tyler's note, to which this was a reply, was dated "Friday evening, January 25, 1861," and read: "The enclosed Telegraphic Despatch is this moment received. May I be permitted to hope that it is based on an unfounded report. If not, will you do me the favor to inform me on what day the Brooklyn sailed, and whether she has recruits for any Southern Fort? and if so, which?"

MEMORANDUM.<sup>1</sup>

[January 25, 1861.]

Friday Morning [January] 25, [1861]. Mr. Tyler called again & Mr. Bigler came. I read to him the principal points of the Message.<sup>2</sup> He was anxious it should be sent that day, & I immediately proceeded to put it in form. I told him it should be sent in that day or at latest on Saturday morning. But the Senate adjourned over till Monday at an early hour, & my purpose was thus defeated.

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VETO MESSAGEON A BILL FOR THE RELIEF OF HOCKADAY AND LEGGIT.<sup>3</sup>

[January 25, 1861.]

TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES:

I return, with my objections, to the house in which it originated, the bill entitled "An act for the relief of Hockaday & Leggit," presented to me on the 15th instant.

This bill appropriates \$59,576 "to Hockaday & Leggit, in full payment for damages sustained by them in reduction of pay for carrying the mails on route No. 8911, and that said amount be paid to William Leggit for and on account of Hockaday & Leggit, and for their benefit."

A bill containing the same language, with the single exception that the sum appropriated therein was \$40,000 instead of \$59,576, passed both houses of Congress at their last session; but it was presented to me at so late a period of the session that I could not examine its merits before the time fixed for the adjournment, and it therefore, under the Constitution, failed to become a law. The increase of the sum appropriated, in the present bill, over that in the bill of the last session, being within a

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 472.

<sup>2</sup> Of Jan. 28, 1861, *infra*, on the Virginia peace resolutions.

<sup>3</sup> S. Misc. Doc. 53, 49 Cong. 2 Sess. 287.

fraction of twenty thousand dollars, has induced me to examine the question with some attention; and I find that the bill involves an important principle which, if established by Congress, may take large sums out of the Treasury.

It appears that, on the 1st day of April, 1858, John M. Hockaday entered into a contract with the Postmaster General for transporting the mail on route No. 8911, from Saint Joseph, Missouri, by Fort Kearney, Nebraska Territory, and Fort Leavenworth, to Salt Lake City, for the sum of \$190,000 per annum for a weekly service. The service was to commence on the 1st day of May, 1858, and to terminate on the 30th November, 1860. By this contract the Postmaster-General reserved to himself the right "to reduce the service to semi-monthly whenever the necessities of the public and the condition of affairs in the Territory of Utah may not require it more frequently." And again, "that the Postmaster-General may discontinue or curtail the service, in whole or in part, in order to place on the route a greater degree of service, or whenever the public interests require such discontinuance for any other cause, he allowing one month's extra pay on the amount of service dispensed with."

On the 11th April, 1859, the Postmaster-General curtailed the service, which he had a clear right to do under the contract, to semi-monthly, with an annual deduction of \$65,000, leaving the compensation \$125,000 for twenty-four trips per year, instead of \$190,000 for fifty-two trips. This curtailment was not to take effect till the 1st of July, 1859.

At the time the contract was made, it was expected that the Army in Utah might be engaged in active operations; and hence the necessity of frequent communications between the War Department and that Territory. The reservation of the power to curtail the service to semi-monthly trips itself proves that the parties had in view the contingency of such curtailment "whenever the necessities of the public and the condition of affairs in the Territory of Utah may not require it more frequently."

Before the Postmaster-General ordered this curtailment, he had an interview with the Secretary of War upon the subject, in the course of which the Secretary agreed that a weekly mail to Saint Joseph and Salt Lake City was no longer needed for the purposes of the Government. This, evidently, because the trouble in Utah had ended.

Mr. Hockaday faithfully complied with his contract, and

the full compensation was paid, at the rate of \$190,000 per annum, up to the 1st July, 1859, and "one month's extra pay on the amount of service dispensed with," according to the contract.

Previous to that date, as has been already stated, on the 14th of April, 1859, the Postmaster-General curtailed the service to twice per month; and on the 11th May, 1859, Messrs. Hockaday & Co. assigned the contract to Jones, Russell & Co. for a bonus of \$50,000. Their property connected with the route was to be appraised, which was effected, and they received on this account about ninety-four thousand dollars—making the whole amount about one hundred and forty-four thousand dollars.

There is no doubt that the contractors have sustained considerable loss in the whole transaction. The amount I shall not pretend to decide, whether \$40,000 or \$59,576, or any other sum.

It will be for Congress to consider whether the precedent established by this bill will not, in effect, annul all restrictions contained in the mail contracts enabling the Postmaster-General to reduce or curtail the postal service according to the public exigencies as they may arise. I have no other solicitude upon the subject. I am informed that there are many cases in the Post-Office Department depending upon the same principle.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

January 25, 1861.<sup>1</sup>

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## MESSAGE

ON THE VIRGINIA PEACE RESOLUTIONS.<sup>2</sup>

[January 28, 1861.]

TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES:

I deem it my duty to submit to Congress a series of resolutions adopted by the Legislature of Virginia, of the 19th instant,

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<sup>1</sup> The veto message having been read, the House proceeded to the reconsideration of the bill, the objections of the President to the contrary notwithstanding, and it was decided in the negative by a vote of 81 yeas against 67 nays. So the bill was lost. (Veto Messages: S. Misc. Doc. 53, 49 Cong. 2 Sess. 288.)

<sup>2</sup> S. Ex. Doc. 3, 36 Cong. 2 Sess.

having in view a peaceful settlement of the exciting questions which now threaten the Union. They were delivered to me on Thursday, the 24th instant, by ex-President Tyler, who has left his dignified and honored retirement in the hope that he may render service to his country in this its hour of peril. These resolutions, it will be perceived, extend an invitation "to all such States, whether slaveholding or non-slaveholding, as are willing to unite with Virginia in an earnest effort to adjust the present unhappy controversies in the spirit in which the Constitution was originally formed, and consistently with its principles, so as to afford to the people of the slaveholding States adequate guarantees for the security of their rights, to appoint commissioners to meet on the 4th day of February next, in the city of Washington, similar commissioners appointed by Virginia, to consider, and, if practicable, agree upon some suitable adjustment."

I confess I hail this movement on the part of Virginia with great satisfaction. From the past history of this ancient and renowned Commonwealth, we have the fullest assurance that what she has undertaken she will accomplish, if it can be done by able, enlightened, and persevering efforts. It is highly gratifying to know\*that other patriotic States have appointed, and are appointing, commissioners to meet those of Virginia in council. When assembled, they will constitute a body entitled, in an eminent degree, to the confidence of the country.

The General Assembly of Virginia have also resolved "that ex-President John Tyler is hereby appointed, by the concurrent vote of each branch of the General Assembly, a commissioner to the President of the United States; and Judge John Robertson is hereby appointed, by a like vote, a commissioner to the State of South Carolina and the other States that have seceded or shall secede, with instructions respectfully to request the President of the United States, and the authorities of such States, to agree to abstain, pending the proceedings contemplated by the action of this General Assembly, from any and all acts calculated to produce a collision of arms between the States and the Government of the United States."

However strong may be my desire to enter into such an agreement, I am convinced that I do not possess the power. Congress, and Congress alone, under the war-making power, can exercise the discretion of agreeing to abstain "from any and all

acts calculated to produce a collision of arms " between this and any other Government. It would therefore be a usurpation for the Executive to attempt to restrain their hands by an agreement in regard to matters over which he has no constitutional control. If he were thus to act they might pass laws which he should be bound to obey, though in conflict with his agreement.

Under existing circumstances my present actual power is confined within narrow limits. It is my duty at all times to defend and protect the public property within the seceding States so far as this may be practicable, and especially to employ all constitutional means to protect the property of the United States, and to preserve the public peace at this the seat of the Federal Government. If the seceding States abstain " from any and all acts calculated to produce a collision of arms," then the danger so much to be deprecated will no longer exist. Defence and not aggression has been the policy of the administration from the beginning.

But whilst I can enter into no engagement such as that proposed, I cordially commend to Congress, with much confidence that it will meet their approbation, to abstain from passing any law calculated to produce a collision of arms pending the proceedings contemplated by the action of the General Assembly of Virginia. I am one of those who will never despair of the Republic. I yet cherish the belief that the American people will perpetuate the Union of the States on some terms just and honorable for all sections of the country. I trust that the mediation of Virginia may be the destined means, under Providence, of accomplishing this inestimable benefit. Glorious as are the memories of her past history, such an achievement, both in relation to her own fame and the welfare of the whole country, would surpass them all.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON CITY, January 28, 1861.

The resolutions were as follows:

PREAMBLE AND RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA,  
JANUARY 19, 1861.

Whereas, it is the deliberate opinion of the General Assembly of Virginia that unless the unhappy controversy which now divides the States of this Confederacy shall be satisfactorily adjusted, a permanent dissolution of the Union is inevitable; and the General Assembly, representing the wishes of



the people of the Commonwealth, is desirous of employing every reasonable means to avert so dire a calamity, and determined to make a final effort to restore the Union and the Constitution in the spirit in which they were established by the fathers of the Republic. Therefore,

*Resolved*, That on behalf of the Commonwealth of Virginia, an invitation is hereby extended to all such States, whether slaveholding or non-slaveholding, as are willing to unite with Virginia in an earnest effort to adjust the present unhappy controversies in the spirit in which the Constitution was originally formed, and consistently with its principles, so as to afford to the people of the slaveholding States adequate guarantees for the security of their rights, to appoint commissioners to meet on the 4th day of February next, in the city of Washington, similar commissioners appointed by Virginia, to consider and if practicable agree upon some suitable adjustment.

*Resolved*, That ex-President John Tyler, William C. Rives, Judge John W. Brockenbrough, George W. Summers, and James A. Seddon are hereby appointed commissioners, whose duty it shall be to repair to the city of Washington, on the day designated in the foregoing resolution, to meet such commissioners as may be appointed by any of the said States in accordance with the foregoing resolution.

*Resolved*, That if said commissioners, after full and free conference, shall agree upon any plan of adjustment requiring amendments of the federal Constitution, for the further security of the rights of the people of the slaveholding States, they be requested to communicate the proposed amendments to Congress, for the purpose of having the same submitted by that body, according to the forms of the Constitution, to the several States for ratification.

*Resolved*, That if said commissioners cannot agree on such adjustment, or if, agreeing, Congress shall refuse to submit for ratification such amendments as may be proposed, then the commissioners of this State shall immediately communicate the result to the Executive of this Commonwealth, to be by him laid before the Convention of the people of Virginia and the General Assembly: *Provided*, that the said commissioners be subject at all times to the control of the General Assembly, or, if in session, to that of the State convention.

*Resolved*, That in the opinion of the General Assembly of Virginia, the propositions embraced in the resolutions presented to the Senate of the United States by the Hon. John J. Crittenden—so modified as that the first article proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States shall apply to all the territory of the United States now held, or hereafter acquired, south of latitude thirty-six degrees and thirty minutes, and provide that slavery of the African race shall be effectually protected as property therein, during the continuance of the territorial government, and the fourth article shall secure to the owners of slaves the right of transit with their slaves between and through the non-slaveholding States and Territories—constitute the basis of such an adjustment of the unhappy controversy which now divides the States of this confederacy, as would be accepted by the people of this Commonwealth.

*Resolved*, That Ex-President John Tyler is hereby appointed by the concurrent vote of each branch of the General Assembly a commissioner to

the President of the United States, and Judge John Robertson is hereby appointed by a like vote a commissioner to the State of South Carolina and the other States that have seceded, or shall secede, with instructions respectfully to request the President of the United States and the authorities of such States to agree to abstain, pending the proceedings contemplated by the action of this General Assembly, from any and all acts calculated to produce a collision of arms between the States and the government of the United States.

*Resolved*, That copies of the foregoing resolutions be forthwith telegraphed to the executives of the several States, and also to the President of the United States, and that the Governor be requested to inform, without delay, the commissioners of their appointment by the foregoing resolutions.

A copy from the rolls.

WM. F. GORDON, JR.,  
C. H. D. and K. R. of Virginia.

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### FROM EX-PRESIDENT TYLER.<sup>1</sup>

BROWN'S HOTEL, Jany. 28th, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:

I leave the City to-morrow morning for the brief interval that elapses between this and the meeting of the [Peace] Commissioners on the 4th February. In making my adieus, which I would do in person but for engagements which prevent, I desire to express my pleasure at hearing your message read to-day in the Senate, and to tender to you my acknowledgments for the facilities you have afforded me of acquitting myself of the mission with which my State entrusted me. I feel but one regret in all that has occurred, and that is in the sailing of the Brooklyn under orders issued before my arrival in this City. I hope, however, that she sailed with such instructions as if followed will prevent any Collision. There is nothing that I more sincerely desire than that your administration may close amid the rejoicings of a great people at the consummation of the work of a renew'd and more harmonious Confederacy.

Will you pardon me for calling your attention to the rumor contained in the newspapers of the morning which state that active proceedings are in course of execution at Fortress Monroe, in planting Cannon upon the land side of the Fort, with their Muzzles turned landward and overlooking the Country. If this be so, Mr. President, is such proceeding either appropriate or well timed? I shall do no more than call your attention to the circumstance and leave it without comment, with this single remark: that when Virginia is making every possible effort to redeem and save the Union, it is seemingly ungracious to have Cannon levelled at her bosom.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 467.

With my most cordial wish for your success in steering the Ship of State amid the critical relations of the Country, I am, my dear Sir,

Truly and faithfully yours,

JOHN TYLER.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE U. STATES.

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TO MR. TYLER.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON 28 January 1861.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your note of this evening & am happy to learn that you were pleased at hearing my message read to-day in the Senate. It expresses my sincere & cordial sentiments. My best wishes attend you on your journey home & for your safe return to this City on the 4th February. I shall then hope to see more of you.

I shall make it a point to inquire to-morrow morning into the rumors in the Newspapers to which you refer, in relation to Fortress Monroe.

Yours very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HIS EXCELLENCY JOHN TYLER.

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TO MR. HOLT.<sup>2</sup>

[January 28, 1861.]

MY DEAR SIR,

I forgot to talk to you about the Company from West Point. Will you come over for a few moments.

Your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: MR. HOLT.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 467.

<sup>2</sup> Holt Papers, Library of Congress. Another letter to Mr. Holt, undated, but probably written on Jan. 29, reads: "Please not to order the Company from West Point until I see you. I believe this was understood yesterday, and I write from abundant caution."

TO MR. SLIDELL.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, January 29, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

With every sentiment of personal friendship and regard, I am obliged to say, in answer to your note of Sunday, that I have full confidence in the Secretary of War; and his acts, in the line of his duty, are my own acts, for which I am responsible.

Yours, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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MESSAGEON A CONVENTION WITH VENEZUELA.<sup>2</sup>

[January 30, 1861.]

TO THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES:

I have received the resolution of the Senate, of the 24th instant, requesting the return to that body of the convention between the United States and the Republic of Venezuela, on the subject of Aves Island. That instrument is, consequently, herewith returned. It was approved by the Senate on the 24th June last, with the following amendment:

Article III: Strike out this article, in the following words:

In consideration of the above agreement and indemnification, the Government of the United States, and the individuals in whose behalf they have been made, agree to desist from all further reclamation respecting the island of Aves, abandoning to the Republic of Venezuela whatever rights might pertain to them.

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 445. Mr. Slidell's letter, to which this is a reply, was dated at Washington, Jan. 27. It reads: "I have seen in the *Star*, and heard from other parties that Major Beauregard, who had been ordered to West Point as Superintendent of the Military Academy, and had entered on the discharge of his duties there, had been relieved from his command. May I take the liberty of asking you if this has been done with your approbation?"

<sup>2</sup> Senate Executive Journal, XI. 256.

The amendment does not seem necessary to secure any right either of the United States or of any American citizen claiming under them. Neither the Government nor the citizens in whose behalf the convention has been concluded have any further claims upon the island of Aves. Nor is it known or believed that there are any claims against the Government of Venezuela having any connection with that island other than those provided for in this convention. I therefore recommend the reconsideration of the subject.

No steps have yet been taken towards making known to the Venezuelan Government the conditional approval of the convention by the Senate. This might have been necessary if the instrument had stipulated for a ratification in the usual form and it had been ratified accordingly. Inasmuch, however, as the convention contains no such stipulation, and as some of the instalments had been paid according to its terms, it has been deemed preferable to suspend further proceedings in regard to it, especially as it was not deemed improbable that the Senate might request it to be returned. This anticipation has been realized.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON, January 30, 1861.

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TO MR. HOLT.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON 30 January 1861.

MY DEAR SIR/

It is time we should have decided whether it is practicable with the means in our power, considering the obstacles interposed in the harbor of Charleston, to reinforce Major Anderson at Fort Sumter, should the action of the authorities of South Carolina or his request render this necessary. The high military attainments & just reputation of General Scott render his advice on this subject of the greatest importance. Should reinforcements be deemed practicable, then in consultation with him a plan

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 474.

ought to be devised in advance to accomplish the object. I should be gratified to see General Scott, the Secretary of the Navy, and yourself, at 12 o'clock to-day, or any other hour most convenient to yourselves, to talk over this & other matters.

Your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN,

HON. JOSEPH HOLT,  
Secretary of War.

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TO MR. HOLT.<sup>1</sup>

31 January 1861.

MY DEAR SIR,

Mr. Yulee has been here and brought me a Telegram from the Postmaster at Pensacola. I wish to shew it to you and converse with you on the subject. I promised, without the slightest committal, to enquire into the case. Please call on your way home or sooner if this be more convenient to you.

Yr. friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: MR. HOLT.

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MESSAGE

ON THE KENTUCKY RESOLUTIONS.<sup>2</sup>

[February 5, 1861.]

TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

I have received from the governor of Kentucky certain resolutions adopted by the general assembly of that Common-

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<sup>1</sup> Holt Papers, Library of Congress.

<sup>2</sup> H. Ex. Doc. 55, 36 Cong. 2 Sess.



wealth, containing an application to Congress for the call of a convention for proposing amendments to the Constitution of the United States, with a request that I should immediately place the same before that body. It affords me great satisfaction to perform this duty; and I feel quite confident that Congress will bestow upon these resolutions the careful consideration to which they are eminently entitled, on account of the distinguished and patriotic source from which they proceed, as well as the great importance of the subject which they involve.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON, February 5, 1861.

[The resolutions were as follows:]

Whereas, the people of some of the States feel themselves deeply aggrieved by the policy and measures which have been adopted by the people of some of the other States; and whereas an amendment of the Constitution of the United States is deemed indispensably necessary to secure them against similar grievances in the future: Therefore—

*Resolved by the general assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky,* That application to Congress to call a convention for proposing amendments to the Constitution of the United States, pursuant to the 5th article thereof, be, and the same is hereby, now made by this general assembly of Kentucky; and we hereby invite our sister States to unite with us, without delay, in similar application to Congress.

*Resolved,* That the governor of this State forthwith communicate the foregoing resolution to the President of the United States, with the request that he immediately place the same before Congress and the executives of the several States, with a request that they lay them before their respective legislatures.

*Resolved,* If the convention be called in accordance with the provisions of the foregoing resolutions, the legislature of the Commonwealth of Kentucky suggest for the consideration of that convention, as a basis for settling existing difficulties, the adoption, by way of amendments to the Constitution, of the resolutions offered in the Senate of the United States by the Hon. John J. Crittenden.

DAVID MERIWETHER,  
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

THOMAS P. PORTER,  
Speaker of the Senate.

Approved January 25, 1861.

B. MAGOFFIN.

By the governor:

THOMAS B. MONROE, JR., Secretary of State.

## MESSAGE

ON FORT SUMTER.<sup>1</sup>

TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

I deemed it a duty to transmit to Congress, with my message of the 8th of January, the correspondence which occurred in December last between the "commissioners" of South Carolina and myself.

Since that period, on the 14th January Colonel Isaac W. Hayne, the attorney general of South Carolina, called and informed me that he was the bearer of a letter from Governor Pickens to myself, which he would deliver the next day. He was, however, induced, by the interposition of Hon. Jefferson Davis and nine other senators from the seceded and seceding States, not to deliver it on the day appointed, nor was it communicated to me until the 31st of January, with his letter of that date. Their letter to him urging this delay bears date January 15, and was the commencement of a correspondence, the whole of which in my possession I now submit to Congress. A reference to each letter of the series, in proper order, accompanies this message.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON, February 8, 1861.

PAPERS ACCOMPANYING THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE, FEBRUARY 9, 1861.

No. 1.—A letter addressed by Hon. Jefferson Davis and others, dated January 15, 1861, to Colonel I. W. Hayne.

No. 2.—Colonel Hayne to Hon. Jefferson Davis and others, January 17, 1861.

No. 3.—Note from Hon. John Slidell and others, communicating to the President the foregoing correspondence, and asking him to take into consideration the subject of it, January 19, 1861.

No. 4.—A letter addressed by the Secretary of War *ad interim* to Hon. John Slidell and others, expressing the views of the President, January 22, 1861.

No. 5.—Colonel Hayne to the senators who had communicated to him the letter of the Secretary of War *ad interim*, transmitted to the President with a note from Mr. Slidell, (January 28, 1861,) January 24, 1861.

No. 6.—Colonel Hayne to the President, with Governor Pickens's letter of January 12, which had not before been communicated, January 31, 1861.

No. 7.—Answer of the Secretary of War to Colonel Hayne, February 6, 1861.

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<sup>1</sup> H. Ex. Doc. 61, 36 Cong. 2 Sess.

## No. 1.

WASHINGTON CITY, January 15, 1861.

SIR: We are apprised that you visit Washington as an envoy from the State of South Carolina, bearing a communication from the governor of your State to the President of the United States in relation to Fort Sumter. Without knowing its contents, we venture to request you to defer its delivery to the President for a few days, or until you and he have considered the suggestions which we beg leave to submit.

We know that the possession of Fort Sumter by troops of the United States, coupled with the circumstances under which it was taken, is the chief if not the only source of difficulty between the government of South Carolina and that of the United States. We would add, that we, too, think it a just cause of irritation and of apprehension on the part of your State. But we have also assurances, notwithstanding the circumstances under which Major Anderson left Fort Moultrie and entered Fort Sumter with the forces under his command, that it was not taken, and is not held, with any hostile or unfriendly purpose towards your State, but merely as property of the United States, which the President deems it his duty to protect and preserve.

We will not discuss the question of right or duty on the part of either government touching that property, or the late acts of either in relation thereto; but we think that, without any compromise of right or breach of duty on either side, an amicable adjustment of the matter of differences may and should be adopted. We desire to see such an adjustment, and to prevent war or the shedding of blood.

We represent States which have already seceded from the United States, or will have done so before the 1st of February next, and which will meet your State in convention on or before the 15th of that month. Our people feel that they have a common destiny with your people, and expect to form with them, in that convention, a new confederation and provisional government. We must and will share your fortunes—suffering with you the evils of war if it cannot be avoided, and enjoying with you the blessings of peace, if it can be preserved. We therefore think it especially due from South Carolina to our States—to say nothing of other slaveholding States—that she should, as far as she can consistently with her honor, avoid initiating hostilities between her and the United States, or any other power. We have the public declaration of the President that he has not the constitutional power or the will to make war on South Carolina, and that the public peace shall not be disturbed by any act of hostility towards your State.

We therefore see no reason why there may not be a settlement of existing difficulties, if time be given for calm and deliberate counsel with those States which are equally involved with South Carolina. We therefore trust that an arrangement will be agreed on between you and the President, at least till the 15th February next, by which time your and our States may in convention devise a wise, just, and peaceable solution of existing difficulties.

In the meantime, we think your State should suffer Major Anderson to obtain necessary supplies of food, fuel, or water, and enjoy free communication, by post or special messenger, with the President, upon the understanding that the President will not send him re-enforcements during the same

period. We propose to submit this proposition and your answer to the President.

If not clothed with power to make such arrangement, then we trust that you will submit our suggestions to the governor of your State for his instructions. Until you have received and communicated his response to the President, of course your State will not attack Fort Sumter, and the President will not offer to re-enforce it.

We most respectfully submit these propositions in the earnest hope that you, or the proper authorities of your State, may accede to them.

We have the honor to be, with profound esteem, your obedient servants,

LOUIS T. WIGFALL.  
JOHN HEMPHILL.  
D. L. YULEE.  
S. R. MALLORY.  
JEFFERSON DAVIS.  
C. C. CLAY, JR.  
BEN. FITZPATRICK.  
A. IVERSON.  
JOHN SLIDELL.  
J. P. BENJAMIN.

HON. ISAAC W. HAYNE.

No. 2.

WASHINGTON, January 17, 1861.

GENTLEMEN: I have received your communication dated the 15th instant. You say you represent States which have already seceded from the United States, or will have done so before the first of February next, and which will meet South Carolina in convention on or before the 15th of that month; that your people feel they have a common destiny with our people, and expect to form with them in that convention a new confederacy and provisional government; that you must and will share our fortunes, suffering with us the evils of war, if it cannot be avoided, and enjoying with us the blessings of peace, if it can be preserved.

I feel, gentlemen, the force of this appeal, and, so far as my authority extends, most cheerfully comply with your request. I am not clothed with power to make the arrangement you suggest, but, provided you can get assurances with which you are entirely satisfied that no re-enforcements will be sent to Fort Sumter in the interval, and that public peace will not be disturbed by any act of hostility towards South Carolina, I will refer your communication to the authorities of South Carolina, and, withholding the communication with which I am at present charged, will await further instructions.

Major Anderson and his command, let me assure you, do *now* obtain all necessary supplies, including fresh meat and vegetables, and I believe fuel and water, from the city of Charleston, and do *now* enjoy communication, by post and special messenger, with the President, and will continue to do so, certainly until the door to negotiation has been closed.

If your proposition is acceded to, you may assure the President that no attack will be made on Fort Sumter until a response from the governor of South Carolina has been received and communicated to him.

I am, with high consideration and profound esteem, your obedient servant,

ISAAC W. HAYNE.

HON. LOUIS T. WIGFALL, JOHN HEMPHILL, D. L. YULEE, S. R. MALLORY,  
JEFFERSON DAVIS, C. C. CLAY, JR., BENJAMIN FITZPATRICK, A. IVERSON,  
JOHN SLIDELL, J. P. BENJAMIN.

No. 3.

SENATE CHAMBER, January 19, 1861.

SIR: We have been requested to present to you a copy of a correspondence between certain senators of the United States and Colonel Isaac W. Hayne, now in this city, on behalf of the government of South Carolina, and to ask that you will take into consideration the subject of said correspondence.

Very respectfully, your obedient servants,

JOHN SLIDELL.  
BEN. FITZPATRICK.  
S. R. MALLORY.

HIS EXCELLENCY JAMES BUCHANAN,  
President of the United States.

No. 4.

WAR DEPARTMENT, January 22, 1861.

GENTLEMEN: The President has received your communication of the 19th instant, with the copy of a correspondence between yourselves and others "representing States which have already seceded from the United States, or will have done so before the 1st of February next," and Colonel Isaac W. Hayne, of South Carolina, in behalf of the government of that State, in relation to Fort Sumter; and you ask the President to "take into consideration the subject of said correspondence." With this request he has respectfully complied, and has directed me to communicate to you his answer.

In your letter to Colonel Hayne, of the 15th instant, you propose to him to defer the delivery of a message from the governor of South Carolina to the President, with which he has been intrusted, for a few days, or until the President and Colonel Hayne shall have considered the suggestions which you submit. It is unnecessary to refer specially to these suggestions, because the letter addressed to you by Colonel Hayne, of the 17th instant, presents a clear and specific answer to them. In this he says: "I am not clothed with power to make the arrangement you suggest; but provided you can get assurances, with which you are entirely satisfied, that no re-enforcements will be sent to Fort Sumter in the interval, and that public peace will not be disturbed by any act of hostility towards South Carolina, I will refer your communication to the authorities of South Carolina, and, withholding

the communication with which I am at present charged, will await further instructions."

From the beginning of the present unhappy troubles the President has endeavored to perform his executive duties in such a manner as to preserve the peace of the country and to prevent bloodshed. This is still his fixed purpose. You therefore do him no more than justice in stating that you have assurances (from his public messages, I presume) that, "notwithstanding the circumstances under which Major Anderson left Fort Moultrie and entered Fort Sumter with the forces under his command, it was not taken and is not held with any hostile or unfriendly purpose towards your State, but merely as property of the United States, which the President deems it his duty to protect and preserve." You have correctly stated what the President deems to be his duty. His sole object now is, and has been, to act strictly on the defensive, and to authorize no movement against the people of South Carolina, unless clearly justified by a hostile movement on their part. He could not well have given a better proof of his desire to prevent the effusion of blood than by forbearing to resort to the use of force under the strong provocation of an attack (happily without a fatal result) on an unarmed vessel bearing the flag of the United States.

I am happy to observe that, in your letter to Colonel Hayne, you express the opinion that it is "especially due from South Carolina to our States, to say nothing of other slaveholding States, that she should, as far as she can consistently with her honor, avoid initiating hostilities between her and the United States, or any other power." To initiate such hostilities against Fort Sumter would, beyond question, be an act of war against the United States.

In regard to the proposition of Colonel Hayne, "that no re-enforcements will be sent to Fort Sumter in the interval, and that public peace will not be disturbed by any act of hostility towards South Carolina," it is impossible for me to give you any such assurances. The President has no authority to enter into such an agreement or understanding. As an executive officer, he is simply bound to protect the public property, so far as this may be practicable; and it would be a manifest violation of his duty to place himself under engagements that he would not perform this duty either for an indefinite or a limited period. At the present moment, it is not deemed necessary to re-enforce Major Anderson, because he makes no such request, and feels quite secure in his position. Should his safety, however, require re-enforcements, every effort will be made to supply them.

In regard to an assurance from the President "that public peace will not be disturbed by any act of hostility towards South Carolina," the answer will readily occur to yourselves. To Congress, and to Congress alone, belongs the power to make war, and it would be an act of usurpation for the Executive to give an assurance that Congress would not exercise this power, however strongly he may be convinced that no such intention exists.

I am glad to be assured, from the letter of Colonel Hayne, that "Major Anderson and his command do *now* obtain all necessary supplies, including fresh meat and vegetables, and, I believe, fuel and water, from the city of Charleston, and do *now* enjoy communication, by post and special messenger, with the President, and will continue to do so, certainly until the door to negotiation has been closed." I trust that these facilities may still be afforded



to Major Anderson. This is as it should be. Major Anderson is not menacing Charleston; and I am convinced that the happiest result which can be obtained is, that both he and the authorities of South Carolina shall remain on their present amicable footing, neither party being bound by any obligations whatever, except the high Christian and moral duty to keep the peace, and to avoid all causes of mutual irritation.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. HOLT,

Secretary of War *ad interim*.

HONS. JOHN SLIDELL, BEN. FITZPATRICK, and S. R. MALLORY.

No. 5.

WASHINGTON, January 24, 1861.

GENTLEMEN: I have received your letter of the 23d instant, enclosing a communication, dated the 22d instant, addressed to Messrs. Fitzpatrick, Mallory, and Slidell, from the Secretary of War *ad interim*. This communication from the Secretary is far from being satisfactory to me. But inasmuch as *you* state that "we (you) have no hesitation in expressing an entire confidence that no re-enforcement will be sent to Fort Sumter, nor will the public peace be disturbed, within the period requisite for full communication between yourself (myself) and your (my) government," in compliance with our previous understanding I withhold the communication with which I am at present charged, and refer the whole matter to the authorities of South Carolina, and will await their reply.

Mr. Gourdin, of South Carolina, now in this city, will leave here by the evening's train, and will lay before the governor of South Carolina and his council the whole correspondence between yourselves and myself, and between you and the government of the United States, with a communication from me asking further instructions.

I cannot, in closing, but express my deep regret that the President should deem it necessary to keep a garrison of troops at Fort Sumter for the protection of the "property" of the United States. South Carolina scorns the idea of appropriating to herself the property of another, whether of a government or an individual, without accounting to the last dollar for everything which, for the protection of her citizens or in vindication of her own honor and dignity, she may deem it necessary to take into her own possession. As property, Fort Sumter is in far greater jeopardy occupied by a garrison of United States troops than it would be if delivered over to the State authorities, with the pledge that, in regard to that and all other property within her jurisdiction claimed by the United States, South Carolina would fully account on a fair adjustment.

Upon the other point, of the preservation of peace and the avoidance of bloodshed, is it supposed that the occupation of a fort by armed men, in the midst of a harbor, with guns bearing on every part of it, under the orders of a government no longer acknowledged, *can be* other than the occasion of constant irritation, excitement, and indignation? It creates a condition of things which I fear is but little calculated to advance the observance of the

"high Christian and moral duty, to keep the peace and to avoid all causes of mutual irritation," recommended by the Secretary of War in his communication.

In my judgment, to continue to hold Fort Sumter by the United States troops is the worst possible means of securing its protection and preservation as property, as it certainly is the worst possible means of effecting a peaceful solution of existing difficulties short of war itself.

I beg leave, in conclusion, to say that it is in deference to the unanimous opinion expressed by the senators present in Washington "representing States which have already seceded from the United States, or will have done so before the 1st of February next," that I comply with your suggestions; and I feel assured that suggestions from such a quarter will be considered with profound respect by the authorities of South Carolina, and will have great weight in determining their action.

With high consideration, I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

ISAAC W. HAYNE.

HONS. LOUIS T. WIGFALL, D. L. YULEE, J. P. BENJAMIN, A. IVERSON, JOHN HEMPHILL, JOHN SLIDELL, and C. C. CLAY, JR.

SENATE CHAMBER, January 28, 1861.

SIR: I have been requested by the gentlemen to whom, with myself, the accompanying letter from Colonel Isaac W. Hayne was addressed, to communicate the same to you.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN SLIDELL.

HIS EXCELLENCY JAMES BUCHANAN,  
President of the United States.

No. 6.

WASHINGTON, January 31, 1861.

SIR: I had the honor to hold a short interview with you on the 14th instant, informal and unofficial. Having previously been informed that you desired that whatever was official should be, on both sides, conducted by written communications, I did not at that time present my credentials, but verbally informed you that I bore a letter from the governor of South Carolina, in regard to the occupation of Fort Sumter, which I would deliver the next day under cover of a written communication from myself. The next day, before such communication could be made, I was waited upon by a senator from Alabama, who stated that he came on the part of all the senators then in Washington from the States which had already seceded from the United States, or would certainly have done so before the first day of February next. The senator from Alabama urged that he and they were interested in the subject of my mission in almost an equal degree with the authorities of South Carolina. He said that hostilities commenced between South Carolina and your government would necessarily involve the States represented by themselves in civil strife; and fearing that the action of South

Carolina might complicate the relations of your government to the seceded and seceding States, and thereby interfere with a peaceful solution of existing difficulties, these senators requested that I would withhold my message to yourself until a consultation among themselves could be had. To this I agreed, and the result of the consultation was the letter of these senators addressed to me, dated January 15, a copy of which is in your possession. To this letter I replied on the 17th, and a copy of that reply is likewise in your possession. This correspondence, as I am informed, was made the subject of a communication from Senators Fitzpatrick, Mallory, and Slidell, addressed to you, and your attention called to the contents. These gentlemen received on the — day of January a reply to their application, conveyed in a letter addressed to them dated — —, signed by the Hon. J. Holt, Secretary of War *ad interim*. Of this letter you of course have a copy. This letter from Mr. Holt was communicated to me under cover of a letter from all the senators of the seceded and seceding States who still remained in Washington, and of this letter, too, I am informed you have been furnished with a copy.

This reply of yours, through the Secretary of War *ad interim*, to the application made by the senators was entirely unsatisfactory to me. It appeared to me to be not only a rejection in advance of the main proposition made by these senators, to wit: that "an arrangement should be agreed on" between the authorities of South Carolina and your government, "at least until the 15th of February next," by which time South Carolina and the States represented by the senators "might in convention devise a wise, just, and peaceable solution of existing difficulties." "In the meantime," they say, "we think," that is, these senators, "that your State (South Carolina) should suffer Major Anderson to obtain necessary supplies of food, fuel, or water, and enjoy free communication, by post or special messenger, with the President, upon the understanding that the President will not send him reinforcements during the same period;" but, besides this rejection of the main proposition, there was, in Mr. Holt's letter, a distinct refusal to make any stipulation on the subject of re-enforcement, even for the short time that might be required to communicate with my government. This reply to the senators was, as I have stated, altogether unsatisfactory to me, and I felt sure would be so to the authorities whom I represented. It was not, however, addressed to me, or to the authorities of South Carolina; and as South Carolina had addressed nothing to your government, and had asked nothing at your hands, I looked not to Mr. Holt's letter, but to the note addressed to me by the senators of the seceded and seceding States. I had consented to withhold my message at *their* instance, provided they could get assurances *satisfactory to them* that no re-enforcements would be sent to Fort Sumter in the interval, and that the peace should not be disturbed by any act of hostility.

The senators expressed in their note to me of the 23d instant *their* entire confidence "that no re-enforcements will be sent to Fort Sumter, nor will the public peace be disturbed within the period requisite for full communication between you (myself) and your (my) government," and renewed their request that I would withhold the communication with which I stood charged, and await further instructions.

This I have done. The further instructions arrived on the 30th instant, and bear date the 26th. I now have the honor to make to you my first communication as special envoy from the government of South Carolina. You will find enclosed the original communication to the President of the United States from the governor of South Carolina, with which I was charged in Charleston on the 12th day of January instant, the day on which it bears date. I am now instructed by the governor of South Carolina to say that his opinion as to the propriety of the demand which is contained in this letter "has not only been confirmed by the circumstances which your (my) mission has developed but is now increased to a conviction of its necessity. The safety of the State requires that the position of the President should be distinctly understood. The safety of all seceding States requires it as much as the safety of South Carolina. If it be so that Fort Sumter is held as *property*, then, as property, the rights, whatever they may be, of the United States can be ascertained, and for the satisfaction of these rights the pledge of the State of South Carolina you are (I am) authorized to give." "If Fort Sumter is not held as property, it is held," say my instructions, "as a military post, and such a post within the limits of South Carolina will not be tolerated." You will perceive that it is upon the presumption that it is solely as property that you continue to hold Fort Sumter that I have been selected for the performance of the duty upon which I have entered. I do not come as a military man to demand the surrender of a fortress, but as the legal officer of the State—its attorney general—to claim for the State the exercise of its undoubted right of eminent domain, and to pledge the State to make good all injury to the rights of property which arise from the exercise of the claim.

South Carolina, as a separate, independent sovereign, assumes the right to take into her own possession everything within her limits essential to maintain her honor or her safety, irrespective of the question of property, subject only to the moral duty requiring that compensation should be made to the owner. This right she cannot permit to be drawn into discussion. As to compensation for any property, whether of an individual or a government, which she may deem it necessary for her honor or safety to take into her possession, her past history gives ample guarantee that it will be made, upon a fair accounting, to the last dollar.

The proposition now is, that her law officer should, under authority of the governor and his council, distinctly pledge the faith of South Carolina to make such compensation in regard to Fort Sumter, and its appurtenances and contents, to the full extent of the money value of the property of the United States delivered over to the authorities of South Carolina by your command. I will not suppose that a pledge like this can be considered insufficient security. Is not the money value of the property of the United States in this fort, situated where it cannot be made available to the United States for any one purpose for which it was originally constructed, worth more to the United States than the property itself? Why then, as property, insist on holding it by an armed garrison? Yet such has been the ground upon which you have invariably placed your occupancy of this fort by troops—beginning prospectively with your annual message of the 4th December, again in your special message of the 9th January, and still more emphatically in your

message of the 28th January. The same position is set forth in your reply to the senators, through the Secretary of War *ad interim*. It is there virtually conceded that Fort Sumter "is held merely as property of the United States, which you deem it your duty to protect and preserve." Again, it is submitted that the continuance of an armed possession actually jeopardizes the property you desire to protect. It is impossible but that such a possession, if continued long enough, must lead to collision. No people not completely abject and pusillanimous could submit indefinitely to the armed occupation of a fortress in the midst of the harbor of its principal city, and commanding the ingress and egress of every ship that enters the port—the daily ferry-boats that ply upon its waters moving but at the sufferance of aliens. An attack upon this fort would scarcely improve it as property, whatever the result; and if captured, it would no longer be the subject of account. To protect Fort Sumter merely as property, it is submitted that an armed occupancy is not only unnecessary, but that it is manifestly the worst possible means which can be resorted to for such an object.

Your reply to the senators, through Mr. Holt, declares it to be your sole object "to act strictly on the defensive, and to authorize no movement against South Carolina, unless justified by a hostile movement on their part." Yet, in reply to the proposition of the senators—that no re-enforcements should be sent to Fort Sumter, provided South Carolina agrees that during the same period no attack should be made—you say "it is impossible for me (your Secretary) to give you (the senators) any such assurance;" that "it would be manifest violation of his (your) duty, to place himself (yourself) under engagements that he (you) would not perform the duty, either for an indefinite or a limited period." In your message of the 28th instant, in expressing yourself in regard to a similar proposition, you say: "However strong may be my desire to enter into such an agreement, I am convinced that I do not possess the power. Congress, and Congress alone, under the war-making power, can exercise the discretion of agreeing to abstain 'from any and all acts calculated to produce a collision of arms' between this and any other government. It would, therefore, be a usurpation for the Executive to attempt to restrain their hands by an agreement in regard to matters over which he has no constitutional control. If he were thus to act, they might pass laws which he should be bound to obey, though in conflict with his agreement." The proposition, it is suggested, was addressed to you under the laws as they now are, and was not intended to refer to a new condition of things arising under new legislation. It was addressed to the executive discretion, acting under existing laws. If Congress should, under the war-making power, or in any other way, legislate in a manner to affect the peace of South Carolina, her interests, or her rights, it would not be accomplished in secret; South Carolina would have timely notice, and she would, I trust, endeavor to meet the emergency.

It is added, in the letter of Mr. Holt, that "at the present moment it is not deemed necessary to re-enforce Major Anderson, because he makes no such request, and feels quite secure in his position;" "but should his safety require it, every effort will be made to supply re-enforcements." This would seem to ignore the other branch of the proposition made by the senators, viz: that no attack was to be made on Fort Sumter during the period suggested,



and that Major Anderson should enjoy the facilities of communication, &c., &c. I advert to this point, however, for the purpose of saying that to send re-enforcements to Fort Sumter could not serve as a means of *protecting* and *preserving property*; for, as must be known to your government, it would inevitably lead to immediate hostilities, in which property on all sides would necessarily suffer. South Carolina has every disposition to preserve the public peace, and feels, I am sure, in full force, those high "Christian and moral duties" referred to by your Secretary; and it is submitted that on her part there is scarcely any consideration of mere property, apart from honor and safety, which could induce her to do aught to jeopard that peace, still less to inaugurate a protracted and bloody civil war. She rests her position on something higher than mere property. It is a consideration of her own dignity as a sovereign, and the safety of her people, which prompts her to demand that this property should not longer be used as a military post by a government she no longer acknowledges. She feels this to be an imperative duty. It has, in fact, become an absolute necessity of her condition.

Repudiating, as you do, the idea of coercion, avowing peaceful intentions, and expressing a patriot's horror for civil war and bloody strife among those who once were brethren, it is hoped that, on further consideration, you will not, on a mere question of property, refuse the reasonable demand of South Carolina, which honor and necessity alike compel her to vindicate. Should you disappoint this hope, the responsibility for the result surely does not rest with her. If the evils of war are to be encountered, especially the calamities of civil war, an elevated statesmanship would seem to require that it should be accepted as the unavoidable alternative of something still more disastrous, such as national dishonor, or measures materially affecting the safety or permanent interests of a people; that it should be a choice deliberately made, and entered upon as war, and of set purpose. But that war should be the incident or accident attendant on a policy professedly peaceful, and not required to effect the object which is avowed, as the only end intended, can only be excused where there has been no warning given as to the consequences.

I am further instructed to say that South Carolina cannot, by her silence, appear to acquiesce in the imputation that she was guilty of an act of unprovoked aggression in firing on the "Star of the West." Though an unarmed vessel, she was filled with armed men, entering her territory against her will with the purpose of re-enforcing a garrison held within her limits against her protest. She forbears to recriminate by discussing the question of the propriety of attempting such a re-enforcement at all, as well as of the disguised and secret manner in which it was intended to be effected; and on this occasion she will say nothing as to the manner in which Fort Sumter was taken into the possession of its present occupants. The interposition of the senators who have addressed you was a circumstance unexpected by my government, and unsolicited certainly by me. The governor, while he appreciates the high and generous motives by which they were prompted, and while he fully approves the delay which, in deference to them, has taken place in the presentation of this demand, feels that it cannot longer be withheld.



I conclude with an extract from the instructions just received by me from the government of South Carolina. "The letter of the President, through Mr. Holt, may be received as the reply to the question you were instructed to ask, as to his assertion of his right to send re-enforcements to Fort Sumter. You were instructed to say to him, if he asserted that right, that the State of South Carolina regarded such a right, when asserted, or with an attempt at its exercise, as a declaration of war. If the President intends it shall not be so understood, it is proper, to avoid any misconception hereafter, that he should be informed of the manner in which the governor will feel bound to regard it. If the President, when you have stated the reasons which prompt the governor in making the demand for the delivery of Fort Sumter, shall refuse to deliver the fort upon the pledge you have been authorized to make, you will communicate that refusal without delay to the governor. If the President shall not be prepared to give you an immediate answer, you will communicate to him that his answer may be transmitted within a reasonable time to the governor at this place, (Charleston, South Carolina.) The governor does not consider it necessary that you (I) should remain longer in Washington than is necessary to execute this, the closing duty of your (my) mission in the manner now indicated to you, (me.) As soon as the governor shall receive from you information that you have closed your mission, and the reply, whatever it may be, of the President, he will consider the conduct which will be necessary on his part."

Allow me to request that you would as soon as possible inform me whether, under these instructions, I need await your answer in Washington. And if not, I would be pleased to convey from you to my government information as to the time when an answer may be expected in Charleston.

With consideration, I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

ISAAC W. HAYNE,  
Special Envoy.

HIS EXCELLENCY JAMES BUCHANAN, President.

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA, EXECUTIVE OFFICE,  
HEADQUARTERS, CHARLESTON, January 12, 1861.

SIR: At the time of the separation of the State of South Carolina from the United States, Fort Sumter was and still is in possession of troops of the United States under the command of Major Anderson. I regard that possession as not consistent with the dignity or safety of the State of South Carolina, and have this day addressed to Major Anderson a communication to obtain from him the possession of that fort by the authorities of this State. The reply of Major Anderson informs me that he has no authority to do what I required; but he desires a reference of the demand to the President of the United States. Under the circumstances now existing, and which need no comment by me, I have determined to send to you the Hon. I. W. Hayne, the attorney general of the State of South Carolina, and have instructed him to demand the delivery of Fort Sumter, in the harbor of Charleston, to the constituted authorities of the State of South Carolina. The demand I have made of Major Anderson, and which I now make of you, is suggested because of my earnest desire to avoid the bloodshed which a persistence in

your attempt to retain possession of that fort will cause, and which will be unavailing to secure to you that possession, but induce a calamity most deeply to be deplored. If consequences so unhappy shall ensue, I will secure for this State, in the demand which I now make, the satisfaction of having exhausted every attempt to avoid it.

In relation to the public property of the United States within Fort Sumter, the Hon. I. W. Hayne, who will hand you this communication, is authorized to give you the pledge of the State that the valuation of such property will be accounted for by this State upon the adjustment of its relations with the United States, of which it was a part.

F. W. PICKENS.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

No. 7.

WAR DEPARTMENT, February 6, 1861.

SIR: The President of the United States has received your letter of the 31st ultimo, and has charged me with the duty of replying thereto.

In the communication addressed to the President by Governor Pickens, under date of the 12th of January, and which accompanies yours now before me, his excellency says: "I have determined to send to you the Hon. I. W. Hayne, the attorney general of the State of South Carolina, and have instructed him to demand the surrender of Fort Sumter, in the harbor of Charleston, to the constituted authorities of the State of South Carolina. The demand I have made of Major Anderson, and which I now make of you, is suggested because of my earnest desire to avoid the bloodshed which a persistence in your attempt to retain the possession of that fort will cause, and which will be unavailing to secure to you that possession, but induce a calamity most deeply to be deplored." The character of the demand thus authorized to be made appears (under the influence, I presume, of the correspondence with the senators to which you refer) to have been modified by subsequent instructions of his excellency, dated the 26th, and received by yourself on the 30th of January, in which he says: "If it be so that Fort Sumter is held as property, then, as property, the rights, whatever they may be, of the United States, can be ascertained, and for the satisfaction of these rights the pledge of the State of South Carolina you are authorized to give." The full scope and precise purport of your instructions, as thus modified, you have expressed in the following words: "I do not come as a military man to demand the surrender of a fortress, but as the legal officer of the State—its attorney general—to claim for the State the exercise of its undoubted right of eminent domain, and to pledge the State to make good all injury to the rights of property which arise from the exercise of the claim." And lest this explicit language should not sufficiently define your position, you add: "The proposition now is that her (South Carolina's) law officer should, under authority of the governor and his council, distinctly pledge the faith of South Carolina to make such compensation, in regard to Fort Sumter and its appurtenances and contents, to the full extent of the money value of the property of the United States delivered over to the authorities of South Carolina by your command." You then adopt his excellency's train

of thought upon the subject, so far as to suggest that the possession of Fort Sumter by the United States, "if continued long enough, must lead to collision," and that "an attack upon it would scarcely improve it as property, whatever the result, and if captured, it would no longer be the subject of account."

The proposal, then, now presented to the President, is simply an offer on the part of South Carolina to buy Fort Sumter and contents as property of the United States, sustained by a declaration, in effect, that if she is not permitted to make the purchase she will seize the fort by force of arms. As the initiation of a negotiation for the transfer of property between friendly governments, this proposal impresses the President as having assumed a most unusual form. He has, however, investigated the claim on which it professes to be based, apart from the declaration that accompanies it. And it may be here remarked, that much stress has been laid upon the employment of the words "property" and "public property" by the President in his several messages. These are the most comprehensive terms which can be used in such a connexion, and surely, when referring to a fort or any other public establishment, they embrace the entire and undivided interest of the government therein.

The title of the United States to Fort Sumter is complete and incontestable. Were its interest in this property purely proprietary, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, it might probably be subjected to the exercise of the right of eminent domain; but it has also political relations to it of a much higher and more imposing character than those of mere proprietorship. It has absolute jurisdiction over the fort and the soil on which it stands. This jurisdiction consists in the authority to "exercise exclusive legislation" over the property referred to, and is therefore clearly incompatible with the claim of eminent domain now insisted upon by South Carolina. This authority was not derived from any questionable revolutionary source, but from the peaceful cession of South Carolina herself, acting through her legislature, under a provision of the Constitution of the United States. South Carolina can no more assert the right of eminent domain over Fort Sumter than Maryland can assert it over the District of Columbia. The political and proprietary rights of the United States in either case rest upon precisely the same ground.

The President, however, is relieved from the necessity of further pursuing this inquiry by the fact that, whatever may be the claim of South Carolina to this fort, he has no constitutional power to cede or surrender it. The property of the United States has been acquired by force of public law, and can only be disposed of under the same solemn sanctions. The President, as the head of the executive branch of the government only, can no more sell and transfer Fort Sumter to South Carolina than he can sell and convey the Capitol of the United States to Maryland or to any other State or individual seeking to possess it. His excellency the governor is too familiar with the Constitution of the United States and with the limitations upon the powers of the Chief Magistrate of the government it has established, not to appreciate at once the soundness of this legal proposition.

The question of re-enforcing Fort Sumter is so fully disposed of in my letter to Senator Slidell and others, under date of the 22d of January, a

copy of which accompanies this, that its discussion will not now be renewed. I then said: "At the present moment it is not deemed necessary to re-enforce Major Anderson, because he makes no such request. Should his safety, however, require re-enforcements, every effort will be made to supply them." I can add nothing to the explicitness of this language, which still applies to the existing status. The right to send forward re-enforcements when, in the judgment of the President, the safety of the garrison requires them, rests on the same unquestionable foundation as the right to occupy the fortress itself.

In the letter of Senator Davis and others to yourself, under date of the 15th ultimo, they say: "We therefore think it especially due from South Carolina to our States—to say nothing of other slaveholding States—that she should, as far as she can consistently with her honor, avoid initiating hostilities between her and the United States or any other power;" and you now yourself give to the President the gratifying assurance that "South Carolina has every disposition to preserve the public peace;" and since he is himself sincerely animated by the same desire, it would seem that this common and patriotic object must be of certain attainment. It is difficult, however, to reconcile with this assurance the declaration on your part that "it is a consideration of her (South Carolina's) own dignity as a sovereign, and the safety of her people, which prompts her to demand that this property should not longer be used as a military post by a government she no longer acknowledges," and the thought you so constantly present, that this occupation must lead to a collision of arms and the prevalence of civil war. Fort Sumter is in itself a military post, and nothing else; and it would seem that not so much the fact as the purpose of its use should give to it a hostile or friendly character. This fortress is now held by the government of the United States for the same objects for which it has been held from the completion of its construction. These are national and defensive; and were a public enemy now to attempt the capture of Charleston or the destruction of the commerce of its harbor, the whole force of the batteries of this fortress would be at once exerted for their protection. How the presence of a small garrison actuated by such a spirit as this, can compromise the dignity or honor of South Carolina, or become a source of irritation to her people, the President is at a loss to understand. The attitude of that garrison, as has been often declared, is neither menacing, nor defiant, nor unfriendly. It is acting under orders to stand strictly on the defensive; and the government and people of South Carolina must well know that they can never receive aught but shelter from its guns, unless, in the absence of all provocation, they should assault it and seek its destruction. The intent with which this fortress is held by the President is truthfully stated by Senator Davis and others in their letter to yourself of the 15th January, in which they say: "It is not held with any hostile or unfriendly purpose towards your State, but merely as property of the United States, which the President deems it his duty to protect and preserve."

If the announcement so repeatedly made, of the President's pacific purposes in continuing the occupation of Fort Sumter until the question shall have been settled by competent authority, has failed to impress the government of South Carolina, the forbearing conduct of his administration for the

last few months should be received as conclusive evidence of his sincerity. And if this forbearance, in view of the circumstances which have so severely tried it, be not accepted as a satisfactory pledge of the peaceful policy of this administration towards South Carolina, then it may be safely affirmed that neither language nor conduct can possibly furnish one. If, with all the multiplied proofs which exist of the President's anxiety for peace, and of the earnestness with which he has pursued it, the authorities of that State shall assault Fort Sumter, and peril the lives of the handful of brave and loyal men shut up within its walls, and thus plunge our common country into the horrors of civil war, then upon them and those they represent must rest the responsibility.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. HOLT,  
Secretary of War.

HON. I. W. HAYNE,

Attorney General of the State of South Carolina.

P. S.—The President has not, as you have been informed, received a copy of the letter to yourself from the senators, communicating that of Mr. Holt of the 22d of January.

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### MEMORANDUM.<sup>1</sup>

[February 8, 1861.]

Friday, 8 February, 1861. President Tyler & his lady called to see me at about three o'clock in the afternoon. They informed me that Col: Hayne became much excited on the perusal of Mr. Holt's last letter & considered it highly insulting in its character.<sup>2</sup> I told them this must be a mere pretext,—there was nothing in that letter unkind or disrespectful, & certainly there was no intention to write anything but what was respectful, as its whole tenor would prove. In answer to it I had received one of the most outrageous & insulting letters from Col: Hayne which had ever been addressed to the head of any Government. He told me he would send for Col: Hayne & get him to withdraw the letter. I told him Col: Hayne had left that morning at 6 o'clock, & his letter was not delivered to me until between 11 & 12.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 468.

<sup>2</sup> This refers to Mr. Holt's letter to Col. Hayne of Feb. 6, 1861, printed under President Buchanan's message to Congress of Feb. 8, *supra*.



He asked me if he might telegraph to Governor Pickens what I had said relative to the character of Mr. Holt's letter. I told him certainly he might, he was at perfect liberty to do so. The letter would speak for itself, & I asked him if he had read it; & he said he had not.

He then asked me & urged upon me to permit him to telegraph to Col: Hayne that I would not send reinforcements to the garrison if Governor Pickens would pledge himself that he would not attack it. I told him this was impossible. I could not agree to bind myself not to reinforce the garrison in case I deemed it necessary. That Mr. Holt's letter showed that these reinforcements had not yet been ordered; but that the character of Col: Hayne's letter was such that these might be immediately necessary.

Mr. Tyler strongly urged that I should withdraw the garrison, and urged reasons to that effect. I told him this [was] quite impossible,—that I could never voluntarily surrender the property of the United States which it was my solemn & imperative duty to protect & defend. (He afterwards addressed me a note urging the same policy, which I did not answer.)<sup>1</sup>

In order to prevent all mistakes, I told him explicitly, as he was about departing, that he was not authorised to telegraph

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<sup>1</sup> The note of Mr. Tyler, here referred to, is as follows:

Saturday evening, February 9, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I communicated to Governor Pickens what passed between us as to Mr. Holt's letter, and I am happy to say that the reply, received a moment ago, leaves me no ground to fear any early disturbance. The whole subject is referred to the convention at Montgomery, as I plainly infer. The conclusion is in these words: "Everything which can be done consistently with the honor and safety of this State to avoid collision and bloodshed, has been and will be the purpose of the authorities here."

Thus, my dear sir, the inquietude you expressed may be dismissed.

Very truly and faithfully yours,

JOHN TYLER.

President Buchanan having communicated to Mr. Tyler a report that Governor Pickens was urging an attack on Fort Sumter, he received from Mr. Tyler the four notes which are given below. With reference to the last one, it may be observed that on Feb. 18, 1861, Jefferson Davis was inaugurated at Montgomery as President of the Confederate States. Mr. Tyler's notes to President Buchanan were as follows:



anything to Gov: Pickens except as to the character of Mr. Holt's letter. That it was not insulting or disrespectful; but on the contrary it was kind and respectful in its tone, & was so intended both by the writer & myself. I then informed him that I had sent Col: Hayne's letter back to him. He said such a letter was highly improper, addressed to the head of a Government.

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Tuesday, February 19, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I do not believe a word of it. My last despatch from Judge Robertson is wholly different. I am at the moment so engaged that I cannot hasten to you. I will as soon as I can.

Respectfully, your friend,

JOHN TYLER.

Wednesday, February 20, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I despatched the telegram at about 5 o'clock. No answer yet. Perhaps it was referred to Montgomery, or time may not have been given to respond before the close of the office. A consultation of cabinet may have been required. In short, many things of a similar nature may have occurred. General Davis will be written to to-day. No attack can be made without orders from Montgomery.

Truly yours,

JOHN TYLER.

Two o'clock P.M., February 20, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I have this moment received a telegram from Charleston. The Governor says: "Received your message; know nothing about the report you speak of; no one is authorized to speak for me; things must stand without any movement in force." I would send the despatch but the latter part of it relates to another matter.

Truly and sincerely your friend,

JOHN TYLER.

BROWN'S HOTEL, February 24, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I think you may rely upon tranquillity at the South. Since you left me I have made particular inquiries. General Davis has been written to and will be written to. He is advised to send a commissioner, and to go to Charleston himself to represent and quiet all things. In fact, from information from one directly from Richmond, and who travelled with merchants from the South going North, the probability is that he is now in Charleston. The fact may probably be announced in the papers to-morrow. Every one that I have seen, secessionists and others, concurs with myself in the improbability of any movement until a commissioner shall come on here and a failure in the mission.

Truly and faithfully yours,

JOHN TYLER.

TO MR. HOLT.<sup>1</sup>

[February 11, 1861.]

MY DEAR SIR

Is your list of Cadets ready? The number of applicants increases daily and hourly. For Heaven's sake bring it over when completed.

Ever yr. friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: MR. HOLT.

## PROCLAMATION

CALLING AN EXTRA SESSION OF THE SENATE.<sup>2</sup>

[February 11, 1861.]

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.  
A PROCLAMATION.

Whereas, objects of interest to the United States require that the Senate should be convened at twelve o'clock on the fourth of March next to receive and act upon such communications as may be made to it on the part of the Executive:

Now, therefore, I, James Buchanan, President of the United States, have considered it to be my duty to issue this my proclamation, declaring that an extraordinary occasion requires the Senate of the United States to convene for the transaction of business at the Capitol, in the city of Washington, on the fourth day of March next, at twelve o'clock at noon on that day, of which all who shall at that time be entitled to act as members of that body are hereby required to take notice.

Given under my hand and the seal of the United States, at Washington, the 11th day of February, A. D. 1861,  
[Seal.] and of the Independence of the United States the eighty-fifth.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

By the President:

J. S. BLACK, Secretary of State.

<sup>1</sup> Holt Papers, Library of Congress.<sup>2</sup> United States Statutes at Large, XII. 1257.

## MESSAGE

ON CLAIMS AGAINST PARAGUAY.<sup>1</sup>

[February 12, 1861.]

TO THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES:

I herewith submit to the Senate for their advice the proceedings and award of the commissioners under the convention between the United States of America and the Republic of Paraguay, proclaimed by the President on the 12th of March, 1860. It is decided by the award of these commissioners that "the United States and Paraguay Navigation Company have not proved or established any right to damages upon their said claim against the Government of the Republic of Paraguay; and that upon the proofs aforesaid the said Government is not responsible to the said company in any damages or pecuniary compensation whatever in all the premises."

The question arises, Had the commissioners authority under the convention to make such an award, or were they not confined to the assessment of damages which the company had sustained from the Government of Paraguay?

Our relations with that Republic had for years been of a most unsatisfactory character. They had been investigated by the preceding and by the present Administration. The latter came to the conclusion that both the interest and honor of the country required that our rights against that Government, for their attack on the *Water Witch*, and for the injuries they had inflicted on this company, should, if necessary, be enforced. Accordingly, the President in his annual message of December, 1857, called the attention of Congress to the subject in the following language: "A demand for these purposes will be made in a firm but conciliatory spirit. This will the more probably be granted if the Executive shall have authority to use other means in the event of a refusal. This is accordingly recommended."

After due deliberation, Congress, on the 2d of June, 1858, authorized the President "to adopt such measures and use such force as in his judgment may be necessary and advisable" in the premises. A commissioner was accordingly appointed, and a force fitted out and despatched to Paraguay for the purpose, if necessary, of enforcing atonement for these wrongs.

<sup>1</sup> Senate Executive Journal, XI. 268-270.

The expedition appeared in the waters of the La Plata, and our commissioner succeeded in concluding a treaty and convention embracing both branches of our demand. The convention of indemnity was signed on the 4th of February, 1859. The preamble of this convention refers to the interruption, for a time, of the good understanding and harmony between the two nations which has rendered that distant armament necessary. By the first article the Government of Paraguay "binds itself for the responsibility in favor of the United States and Paraguay Navigation Company which may result from the decree of commissioners" to be appointed in the manner provided by article 2. This was in accordance with the instructions to our commissioner, who was told that an indispensable preliminary to the negotiation would, "of course, be an acknowledgment on the part of the Paraguayan Government of its liability to the company." The first paragraph of this second article clearly specifies the object of the convention. This was not to ascertain whether the claim was just, to enforce which we had sent a fleet to Paraguay, but to constitute a commission to "determine," not the existence, but "the amount of said reclamations." The final paragraph provides that "the two commissioners, named in the said manner, shall meet in the city of Washington, to investigate, adjust, and *determine the amount* of the claims of the above-mentioned company upon sufficient proofs of the charges and defenses of the contending parties." By the fifth article, the Government of Paraguay "binds itself to pay to the Government of the United States of America, in the city of Assumption, Paraguay, thirty days after presentation to the Government of the Republic, the draft which that of the United States of America shall issue for the amount for which the two commissioners concurring, or by the umpire, shall declare it responsible to the said company."

The act of Congress of May 16, 1860, employs the same language that is used in the convention, "to investigate, adjust, and determine the amount" of the claims against Paraguay. Congress, not doubting that an award would be made in favor of the company for some certain amount of damages, in the sixth section of the act referred to provides that the money paid out of the Treasury for the expenses of the commission "shall be retained by the United States out of the money" (not any money) "that may, pursuant to the terms of said convention, be received from Paraguay."

After all this had been done, after we had fitted out a

warlike expedition, in part, to obtain satisfaction for this very claim, after these solemn acts had been performed by the two Republics, the commissioners have felt themselves competent to decide that they could go behind the action of the legislative and executive branches of this Government, and determine that there was no justice in the original claim. A commissioner of Paraguay might have been a proper person to act merely in assessing the amount of damages when an arbiter had been provided to decide between him and the commissioner on the part of the United States; but to have authorized him to decide upon the original justice of the claim against his own Government would have been a novelty. The American commissioner is as pure and honest a man as I have ever known, but I think he took a wrong view of his powers under the convention.

The principle of the liability of Paraguay having been established by the highest political acts of the United States and that Republic in their sovereign capacity, the commissioners, who would seem to have misapprehended their powers, have investigated and undertaken to decide whether the Government of the United States was right or wrong in the authority which they gave to make war, if necessary, to secure the indemnity. Governments may be, and doubtless often have been, wrong in going to war to enforce claims; but after this has been done, and the injury which led to the reclamations has been acknowledged by the Government that inflicted it, it does not appear to me to be competent for commissioners authorized to ascertain the indemnity for the injury, to go behind their authority and decide upon the original merits of the claim for which the war was made. If a commissioner were appointed under a convention to ascertain the damage sustained by an American citizen in consequence of the capture of a vessel admitted by the foreign government to be illegal, and he should go behind the convention and decide that the original capture was a lawful prize, it would certainly be regarded as an extraordinary assumption of authority.

The present appears to me to be a case of this character, and for these reasons I have deemed it advisable to submit the whole subject for the consideration of the Senate.

JAMES BUCHANAN.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON CITY, 12th February, 1861.

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<sup>1</sup>For a history of these cases before and after this message, see Moore, *International Arbitrations*, II. 1485 et seq.

## MESSAGE

ON THE SAN JUAN WATER BOUNDARY.<sup>1</sup>

[February 21, 1861.]

TO THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES:

The treaty concluded between Great Britain and the United States on the 15th of June, 1846, provided in its first article that the line of boundary between the territories of Her Britannic Majesty and those of the United States, from the point on the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude, up to which it had already been ascertained, should be continued westward along the said parallel "to the middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver's Island, and thence southerly through the middle of said channel and of Fuca's Straits to the Pacific Ocean." When the commissioners appointed by the two Governments to mark the boundary line came to that point of it which is required to run southerly through the channel which divides the continent from Vancouver's Island, they differed entirely in their opinions, not only concerning the true point of deflection from the forty-ninth parallel, but also as to the channel intended to be designated in the treaty. After a long-continued and very able discussion of the subject, which produced no result, they reported their disagreement to their respective Governments. Since that time the two Governments, through their ministers here and at London, have had a voluminous correspondence on the point in controversy, each sustaining the view of its own commissioner, and neither yielding in any degree to the claims of the other. In the meantime the unsettled condition of this affair has produced some serious local disturbances, and on one occasion at least has threatened to destroy the harmonious relations existing between Great Britain and the United States. The island of San Juan will fall to the United States if our construction of the treaty be right, while if the British interpretation be adopted it will be on their side of the line. That island is an important possession to this country, and valuable for agricultural as well as military purposes. I am convinced that it is ours by the treaty, fairly and impartially construed. But argument

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<sup>1</sup> Senate Executive Journal, XI. 278.



has been exhausted on both sides without increasing the probability of final adjustment. On the contrary, each party seems now to be more convinced than at first of the justice of its own demands. There is but one mode left of settling the dispute, and that is by submitting it to the arbitration of some friendly and impartial power. Unless this be done, the two countries are exposed to the constant danger of a collision which may end in war.

It is under these circumstances that the British Government, through its minister here, has proposed the reference of the matter in controversy to the King of Sweden and Norway, the King of the Netherlands, or to the Republic of the Swiss Confederation. Before accepting this proposition I have thought it right to take the advice of the Senate.

The precise questions which I submit are these: Will the Senate approve a treaty referring to either of the sovereign powers above named the dispute now existing between the Governments of the United States and Great Britain, concerning the boundary line between Vancouver's Island and the American continent? In case the referee shall find himself unable to decide where the line is by the description of it in the treaty of 15th June, 1846, shall he be authorized to establish a line according to the treaty as nearly as possible? Which of the three powers named by Great Britain as an arbiter shall be chosen by the United States?

All important papers bearing on the questions are herewith communicated in the originals. Their return to the Department of State is requested when the Senate shall have disposed of the subject.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON, 21 Feby., 1861.

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TO EX-PRESIDENT TYLER.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON 22 February 1861.

MY DEAR SIR/

I find it impossible to prevent two or three companies of the Federal troops here from joining in the procession to-day with the volunteers of the District without giving serious offence to the tens of thousands of the people who have assembled to witness the parade. The day is the anniversary of Washington's birth, —a festive occasion throughout the land, & it has been particularly marked by the House of Representatives. These troops everywhere else join such processions in honor of the birthday of the father of his Country, & it would be hard to assign a good reason why they should be excluded from this privilege in the Capital founded by himself. They are here simply as a posse comitatus to aid the civil authority in case of need. Besides, the programme was published in the National Intelligencer of this morning without my knowledge.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

PRESIDENT TYLER.

## MESSAGE

ON AVES ISLAND.<sup>2</sup>

[February 23, 1861.]

TO THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES:

In compliance with the resolutions of the Senate of the 17th and 18th February, 1858, requesting information upon the subject of the Aves Island, I transmit a report from the Secretary of State, and the documents which accompanied it.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON, February 23, 1861.

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 495.

<sup>2</sup> S. Ex. Doc. 10, 36 Cong. 2 Sess. See Moore's International Law Digest, I. 266, 571; V. 211; VII. 122.

## MESSAGE

ON A TREATY WITH THE DELAWARE INDIANS.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, February 23, 1861.

SIR: Herewith I inclose, for constitutional action of the Senate thereon, should it approve the same, supplemental articles of agreement made and concluded with the authorities of the Delaware Indians, on the 21st July last, with a view to the abrogation of the sixth article of the treaty of May 30, 1860.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

To HONORABLE JOHN C. BRECKINRIDGE,  
President of the Senate.

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## MESSAGE

ON THE SEIZURE OF THE NEW ORLEANS MINT.<sup>2</sup>

[February 23, 1861.]

TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES:

In answer to a resolution of the House of Representatives, adopted on the 11th instant, respecting the seizure of the mint at New Orleans, with a large sum of money therein, by the authorities of the State of Louisiana, the refusal of the treasurer of the branch mint to pay drafts of the United States, &c., I have to state that all the information within my possession or power on these subjects was communicated to the House by the Secretary of the Treasury on the 21st instant, and was prepared under the resolution above referred to, and a resolution of the same date addressed to himself.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON, February 23, 1861.

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<sup>1</sup> Senate Executive Journal, XI. 284.

<sup>2</sup> H. Ex. Doc. 79, 36 Cong. 2 Sess. 1.

## MESSAGE

ON ANDERSON'S EXTRADITION.<sup>1</sup>

[February 26, 1861.]

TO THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES:

In answer to the resolution of the Senate of the 25th instant, requesting information relative to the extradition of one Anderson, a man of color, charged with the commission of murder in the State of Missouri, I transmit a report from the Secretary of State, and the documents by which it was accompanied. The despatch of Mr. Dallas being the original, its return to the Department of State is requested.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON, February 26, 1861.

## MESSAGE

ON TROOPS IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON.<sup>2</sup>

[March 1, 1861.]

TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

In answer to their resolution of the 11th instant "that the President of the United States furnish to this House, if not incompatible with the public service, the reasons that have induced him to assemble so large a number of troops in this city, and why they are kept here; and whether he has any information of a conspiracy upon the part of any portion of the citizens of this country to seize upon the capital and prevent the inauguration of the President elect,"

The President submits that the number of troops assembled in this city is not large, as the resolution presupposes, its total amount being six hundred and fifty-three men, exclusive of the

<sup>1</sup> S. Ex. Doc. 11, 36 Cong. 2 Sess.<sup>2</sup> H. Ex. Doc. 82, 36 Cong. 2 Sess.

marines, who are, of course, at the navy yard as their appropriate station. These troops were ordered here to act as a posse comitatus, in strict subordination to the civil authority, for the purpose of preserving peace and order in the city of Washington, should this become necessary, before or at the period of the inauguration of the President elect.

Since the date of the resolution, the Hon. Mr. Howard, from the select committee, has made a report to the House on this subject. It was thoroughly investigated by that committee; and although they have expressed the opinion "that the evidence produced before them does not prove the existence of a secret organization here or elsewhere, hostile to the government, that has for its object, upon its own responsibility, an attack upon the Capitol or any of the public property here, or an interruption of any of the functions of the government;" yet the House laid upon the table, by a very large majority, a resolution expressing the opinion "that the regular troops now in this city ought to be forthwith removed therefrom." This of itself was a sufficient reason for not withdrawing the troops.

But what was the duty of the President at the time the troops were ordered to this city? Ought he to have waited, before this precautionary measure was adopted, until he could obtain proof that a secret conspiracy existed to seize the capital? In the language of the select committee, this was "in a time of high excitement consequent upon revolutionary events transpiring all around us, the very air filled with rumors, and individuals indulging in the most extravagant expressions of fears and threats." Under these and other circumstances, which I need not detail, but which appear in the testimony before the select committee, I was convinced that I ought to act. The safety of the immense amount of public property in this city and that of the archives of the government, in which all the States, and especially the new States, in which the public lands are situated, have a deep interest; the peace and order of the city itself, and the security of the inauguration of the President elect, were objects of such vast importance to the whole country that I could not hesitate to adopt precautionary defensive measures. At the present moment, when all is quiet, it is difficult to realize the state of alarm which prevailed when the troops were first ordered to this city. This almost instantly subsided after the arrival of

the first company, and a feeling of comparative peace and security has since existed both in Washington and throughout the country. Had I refused to adopt this precautionary measure, and evil consequences, which many good men at the time apprehended, had followed, I should never have forgiven myself.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON, March 1, 1861.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The delay in replying to the resolution of February 11, which was offered by Mr. Burnett, was due to the fact that the select committee referred to in the foregoing message reported, after investigation, that the evidence did not prove the existence of a conspiracy to seize the capital and prevent the inauguration of the new President. President Buchanan considered that this disposed of the matter, but, on learning that some of the members of the House conceived his failure to answer the resolution to be disrespectful, he sent in the message which has been given above. In view of the criticisms made of the action of the administration in assembling troops at the capital, Mr. Holt made a report upon the subject, and sought to obtain the permission of President Buchanan to publish it immediately. Mr. Holt's letter in which such permission is solicited is printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 492. But so interesting is it, as a reflex of the different shades of sentiment of the time, that it is proper here to reprint it, in connection with the message of March 1, 1861. The letter reads:

WAR DEPARTMENT, Feb. 20, 1861.

DEAR SIR:—

I inclose a copy of the resolution referred to in the paper which I had the honor to address to you on yesterday, and trust I shall be pardoned for saying that I shall be very unhappy, if this defence—truthful and tempered as it is—is not permitted to reach the country. The act of assembling troops at the capital, and providing for the inauguration of your successor under the shelter of their guns, is one of the gravest and most responsible of your administration. It constitutes, indeed, an epoch in the history of our institutions, and as the circumstances surrounding you fully justify the measure, they should be frankly and fearlessly set forth to the world. For this step your administration has been, and still continues to be, mercilessly denounced, and of this denunciation, as you are aware, a large part has fallen to my share. I have been defamed in my own State, and in the towns of my nearest relatives and friends, and I confess that I have not yet attained to the Christian philosophy of bearing such things as an ox led to the slaughter, without opening my mouth. Congress is now engaged in spreading broadcast over the country, through the efforts of your enemies and mine, a report intended to show that the safety of the capital has never been menaced, and of course that all your preparations here have been



## MESSAGE

ON A TREATY WITH COSTA RICA.<sup>1</sup>

[March 2, 1861.]

TO THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES:

I deem it proper to invite the attention of the Senate to the fact that with this day expires the limitation of time for the exchange of the ratifications of the treaty with Costa Rica of 2d July, 1860.

The minister of that Republic is disappointed in not having received the copy intended for exchange, and the period will lapse without the possibility of carrying out the provisions of the convention in this respect.

I submit, therefore, the expediency of the passage of a resolution authorizing the exchange of ratifications at such time as may be convenient, the limitations of the ninth article to the contrary notwithstanding.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON, 2 March, 1861.

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prompted by cowardice, or the spirit of despotism. *Now* is the time to meet this calumny. A few weeks hence the memory of the measure assailed will be swallowed up by the heady current of events, and nothing will remain but the wounds to the reputation and sensibilities of your friends who gave to that measure their honest and zealous support. I do not ask you to adopt my report as your own, but to submit it simply as the views entertained by the War Department, and for which its head should alone be held responsible.

The helplessness of my position for all purposes of self-defence, without your kind coöperation, must be my apology for the solicitude expressed.

Very sincerely your friend,

J. HOLT.

<sup>1</sup> Senate Executive Journal, XI. 294.

MEMORANDUM.<sup>1</sup>

[March 4-9, 1861.]

Monday, March 4, 1861. The cabinet met at the President's room in the Capitol, to assist me in examining the bills which might be presented to me for approval, between the hours of ten and twelve of that day, when my own term and that of Congress would expire.

Mr. Holt did not attend until after eleven o'clock. At the first opportunity, he informed us that on that morning he had received extraordinary despatches from Major Anderson, saying that without a force of some twenty or thirty thousand men to capture the batteries which had been erected, he could not maintain himself at Fort Sumter, and he [Mr. Holt] intended at once to communicate these despatches to President Lincoln. The cabinet had some conversation on the subject that evening at Mr. Ould's.

Tuesday morning, 5th March, we saw Mr. Holt at the War Department. He there read us what he had written to President Lincoln in communicating these despatches to Mr. Holt, giving his reasons for his astonishment. He referred to his own letter to Major Anderson after he had taken possession of Fort Sumter, offering him reinforcements, and the repeated letters of the Major stating that he felt secure, and finally a letter, after the affair of the Star of the West, stating that he did not desire reinforcements. He concluded by referring to the expedition which had been prepared at New York under the direction of General Scott, to sail at once, in case the Major should be attacked or ask for reinforcements. This was small, consisting of two or three hundred men with provisions.

On Tuesday afternoon, 5th March, Mr. Holt told me he had sent the papers to President Lincoln.

This is the last I have heard of it, from any member of the cabinet or any friend at Washington, up till this day (Saturday morning), 9th March, at half-past ten A.M.

Editorial Note.—The letter of Mr. Holt to President Lincoln, referred to above, is as follows:<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Curtiss's Buchanan, II. 497.

<sup>2</sup> Turning on the Light, by Horatio King, pp. 126-128.

WAR DEPARTMENT, March 5, 1861.

SIR,—

I have the honor to submit for your consideration several letters with inclosures received on yesterday from Major Anderson and Captain Forster of the Corps of Engineers, which are of a most important and unexpected character. Why they were unexpected will appear from the following brief statement:

After transferring his forces to Fort Sumter he (Major Anderson) addressed a letter to this Department, under date of the 31st December, 1860, in which he says, "Thank God! we are now where the Government may send us additional troops *at its leisure*. To be sure, the uncivil and uncourteous action of the Governor (of South Carolina) in preventing us from purchasing anything in the city will annoy and inconvenience us somewhat; *still we are safe*." And after referring to some deficiency in his stores, in the articles of soap and candles, he adds: "Still we can cheerfully put up with the inconvenience of doing without them for the satisfaction we feel in the knowledge that we can command this harbor as long as *our Government wishes to keep it*." And again, on the 6th of January, he wrote: "My position will, should there be no treachery among the workmen whom we are compelled to retain for the present, enable me to hold this fort *against any force which can be brought against me*; and it would enable me, in the event of war, to annoy the South Carolinians by preventing them from throwing supplies into their new posts except by the aid of the Wash Channel through Stono River."

Before the receipt of this communication, the Government, being without information as to his condition, had despatched the *Star of the West* with troops and supplies for Fort Sumter, but the vessel, having been fired on from a battery at the entrance of the harbor, returned without having reached her destination.

On the 16th of January, 1861, in replying to Major Anderson's letters of the 31st of December and of the 6th of January, I said, "Your late despatches, as well as the very intelligent statements of Lieutenant Talbot, have relieved the Government of the apprehensions previously entertained for your safety. In consequence it is not its purpose at present to reinforce you. The attempt to do so would no doubt be attended by a collision of arms and effusion of blood—a national calamity which the President is most anxious to avoid. You will, therefore, report frequently your condition, and the character and activity of the preparations, if any, which may be being made for an attack upon the fort or for obstructing the Government in any endeavors it may make to strengthen your command. Should your despatches be of a nature too important to be intrusted to the mails, you will convey them by special messenger. Whenever, in your judgment, additional supplies or reinforcements are necessary for your safety or for a successful defence of the fort, you will at once communicate the fact to this Department, and prompt and vigorous effort will be made to forward them."

Since the date of this letter Major Anderson has regularly and frequently reported the progress of the batteries being constructed around him,

and which looked either to the defence of the harbor or to an attack on his own position. But he has not suggested that these works compromised his safety, nor has he made any request that additional supplies or reinforcements should be sent to him. On the contrary, on the 30th of January, 1861, in a letter to this Department, he uses this emphatic language: "I do hope that no attempt will be made by your friends to throw supplies in; their doing so would do more harm than good."

On the 5th of February, when referring to the batteries, etc., constructed in his vicinity, he said, "Even in their present condition they will make it impossible for any hostile force, other than a large and well-appointed one, to enter this harbor, and the chances are that it will then be a great sacrifice of life;" and in a postscript he adds: "Of course, in speaking of forcing an entrance, I do not refer to the little stratagem of a small party slipping in." This suggestion of a stratagem was well considered, in connection with all the information that could be obtained bearing upon it, and in consequence of the vigilance and number of the guard-boats in and outside of the harbor it was rejected as impracticable.

In view of these very distinct declarations, and of the earnest desire to avoid a collision as long as possible, it was deemed entirely safe to adhere to the line of policy indicated in my letter of the 16th January, which has already been quoted. In that Major Anderson had been requested to report "at once," "whenever, in his judgment, additional supplies or reinforcements were necessary for his safety or for a successful defence of the fort." So long, therefore, as he remained silent upon this point the Government felt that there was no ground for apprehension. Still, as the necessity for action might arise at any moment, an expedition has been quietly prepared, and is ready to sail from New York on a few hours' notice, for transporting troops and supplies to Fort Sumter. This step was taken under the supervision of General Scott, who arranged its details, and who regarded the reinforcements thus provided for as sufficient for the occasion. The expedition, however, is not upon a scale approaching the seemingly extravagant estimates of Major Anderson and Captain Forster, now offered for the first time, and for the disclosures of which the Government was wholly unprepared.

The declaration now made by the major that he would not be willing to risk his reputation on an attempt to throw reinforcements into Charleston harbor, and with a view of holding possession of the same, with a force of less than twenty thousand good and well-disciplined men, takes the Department by surprise, as his previous correspondence contained no such intimation.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

J. HOLT.

TO THE PRESIDENT.

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MR. BUCHANAN'S RETURN TO WHEATLAND,  
MARCH 4-6, 1861.<sup>1</sup>

Local pride and personal admiration for Mr. Buchanan had always contributed to his strength at home in popular contests. In the County of Lancaster, which to this day remains one of the strongholds of the anti-Democratic party, Mr. Buchanan received 8731 votes to 6608 for Fremont and 3615 for Fillmore. In the city the utmost hopes of his friends were more than realized by a plurality of 1196, about four times the usual Democratic majority, and a majority over Fillmore and Fremont of 864. In the little township of Lancaster, on the outskirts of the city, in which Mr. Buchanan's suburban home was situated, and which the *New York Herald* called "The Wheatland district," the average opposition majority of sixty was reduced to four. The interest and affection with which he was regarded at home was testified by the escort of an immense body of citizens of all parties which accompanied him from his house to the railroad station, when he left for Washington on March 2, 1857. The whole population of the city and vicinity seemed to have turned out upon the occasion, and the severity of the weather did not chill their enthusiasm. His immediate escort to the capital consisted of the local military company, the Fencibles, committees of council, representatives of Franklin and Marshall College, of the board of trustees of which institution he was president, and a number of personal friends.

On his expected return to Wheatland, after the close of his term, a citizens' meeting appointed a committee of his neighbors and friends to escort him on his way. When those gentlemen arrived in Washington and, through their chairman, Hon. H. M. North, acquainted the President with their mission, he was deeply moved by the manifestation of good feeling toward him. A small military escort accompanied him and his friends to the railroad station in Washington, en route for Lancaster. They stopped over in Baltimore, and during the evening the ex-President received a large number of its citizens. In response to a serenade given him about eleven o'clock in the evening, at Barnum's Hotel, he spoke as follows:

MY FRIENDS:—

I thank you most cordially for this honor, and a long period of time must elapse before memory shall fail to record it. The music is admirable indeed, and the delicious strains cannot fail to gratify the taste of any person whose genius or talents lead him to such a high accomplishment. But the music is nothing at all compared to the motives and feelings which prompted the

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 507. The Hon. W. U. Hensel furnished to Mr. Curtis this sketch of the ex-President's journey from Washington to Wheatland.

compliment. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your kind sentiments therein expressed.

There are some who are ever ready to pay homage to those who are about entering upon the cares of office, influenced doubtless by a principle of self-aggrandizement; but you pay your attentions to an old man going out of office, and now on his way to a retired and peaceful home. For many years I have experienced a deep regard for the interests of Baltimore, have rejoiced in her prosperity, and sympathized in her temporary misfortunes; and now one of the strongest feelings of my heart is, that she may continue an extension of her limits, enjoy an increase of trade and an abundance of labor for her deserving laboring classes.

I must ask you to excuse this brief speech. I could say much more, but the night is advancing, and I forbear to detain you. My public history is before the people of this country, and whilst it does not behoove me to speak of it, I assure you of my willingness that they shall judge me by my kind regard for all the citizens of Baltimore; and that God may prosper and bless them all is the sincere prayer of an honest heart.

The Battalion and Baltimore City Guards having been added to his escort, the homeward journey was resumed on the next morning, and at York and other points on the road there were demonstrations of popular welcome. At Columbia, Pa., a town on the Susquehanna River, on the west border of Lancaster County, he was welcomed at the gates of his own county by a committee of about one hundred and fifty citizens of Lancaster, and delegates from Columbia and surrounding towns and villages, who had gathered there to receive him when his foot first fell upon the soil of the district which claimed him as peculiarly its own. As the train which carried him and his friends and the popular escort, now swelled to many hundreds, neared the city, there was firing of cannon, pealing of bells, and the formation of a procession to escort the party through the streets of the city. The cars were stopped at the city limits, and Mr. Buchanan was conducted into an open barouche, drawn by four gray horses, and with a great civic and military display he entered the city, and passing through its principal streets, was taken to the public square. The procession halted and broke ranks, and an immense citizens' meeting was organized, in the presence of which Wm. J. Preston, Esq., on behalf of the Baltimore City Guards, addressed Mayor Sanderson, consigning the ex-President to his old friends and neighbors. After the band had played "Home Again," the Mayor, addressing Mr. Preston, returned the thanks of the citizens to his company for their courtesies to Mr. Buchanan, and then, turning to the guest of the occasion, welcomed him back to his home. Mr. Buchanan, in responding to this speech, said:



MR. MAYOR, MY OLD NEIGHBORS, FRIENDS, AND FELLOW-CITIZENS:—

I have not language to express the feelings which swell in my heart on this occasion: but I do most cordially thank you for this demonstration of your personal kindness to an old man, who comes back to you ere long to go to his final rest. And here let me say that, having visited many foreign climes, my heart has ever turned to Lancaster as the spot where I would wish to live and die. When yet a young man, in far remote Russia, my heart was still with friends and neighbors in good old Lancaster. [Applause.]

Although I have always been true to you, I have not been half so true to you as you have been to me. Your fathers took me up when a young man, fostered and cherished me through many long years. All of them have passed away, and I stand before you to-day in the midst of a new generation. [A voice in the crowd—"I saw you mount your horse when you marched to Baltimore in the war of 1812."] The friendship of the fathers for myself has descended on their children. Generations of mortal men rise, and sink, and are forgotten, but the kindness of the past generation to me, now so conspicuous in the present, can never be forgotten.

I have come to lay my bones among you, and during the brief, intermediate period which Heaven may allot me, I shall endeavor to perform the duties of a good citizen, and a kind friend and neighbor. My advice shall be cheerfully extended to all who may seek it, and my sympathy and support shall never be withheld from the widow and the orphan. [Loud applause.] All political aspirations have departed. What I have done, during a somewhat protracted public life, has passed into history. If, at any time, I have done aught to offend a single citizen, I now sincerely ask his pardon, while from my heart I declare that I have no feeling but that of kindness to any individual in this county.

I came to this city in 1809, more than half a century ago, and am, therefore, I may say, among your oldest citizens. When I parted from President Lincoln, on introducing him to the Executive Mansion, according to custom, I said to him: "If you are as happy, my dear sir, on entering this house as I am in leaving it and returning home, you are the happiest man in this

country!" I was then thinking of the comforts and tranquillity of home, as contrasted with the troubles, perplexities, and difficulties inseparable from the Presidential office. Since leaving Washington, I have briefly addressed my friends on two or three occasions, but have purposely avoided all allusions to party politics, and I shall do so here.

There is one aspiration, however, which is never absent from my mind for a single moment, and which will meet with a unanimous response from every individual here present, and that is, may God preserve the Constitution and the Union, and in His good providence dispel the shadows, clouds, and darkness which have now cast a gloom over the land! Under that benign influence we have advanced more rapidly in prosperity, greatness and glory than any other nation in the tide of time. Indeed, we had become either the envy or admiration of the whole world. May all our troubles end in a peaceful solution, and may the good old times return to bless us and our posterity! [Loud and prolonged applause.]

At the conclusion of his remarks, he seated himself in his carriage, and was escorted out through the main street leading westward to Wheatland, on the way passing under an arch spanning the street, and with other signs of popular enthusiasm attending the occasion. When the procession reached Wheatland, the city guards were drawn up in front of the house, and to the music of "Home, Sweet Home," he ascended the portico and re-entered upon the scenes of that tranquillity in which it was his desire to spend the rest of his days. Briefly addressing the military company drawn up in review before him, he said that he regarded that day as one of the proudest of his life. He thanked the officers and members for their handsome escort, so freely tendered him, and held it especially significant, as he was now a private citizen only. He regretted that having just reached his home, he was not prepared to entertain them. The doors of his house had been always open, the latch-string was out. At any other time when they felt disposed to call, either as a company or individuals, they should receive a very cordial welcome. On behalf of the guards, Mr. Preston responded at length, expressing their gratification at having the privilege of attending the President, and witnessing the cordiality and universal honor with which he had been received here. Late at night Mr. Buchanan was serenaded by the musical bodies of Lancaster.

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FROM MR. STANTON.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, Sunday, 10 March, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:

The dangerous illness of my youngest child for the last three days must be my apology for not writing you until to-day. I shall now endeavor to give you as full information as I possess of the state of public affairs at Washington. At the Depot on the afternoon of your departure, I parted with Mr. Holt & Mr. Toucey, & have not seen them since then. The Cabinet were, as you know, nominated & confirmed that day.

The next morning Mr. Seward took possession of the State Department, and Mr. Bates was shortly afterwards qualified & commissioned as Attorney General. Before this was done, Mr. Seward sent for me and requested me to draw up a nomination of Mr. Crittenden for Judge of the United States Court. I did so, and gave it to him. My understanding was that the nomination would be immediately sent in. But it has not been sent, and the general understanding is, that it *will not be*. The rumor is, that the *red blacks* oppose it and also many of the Democrats, and that Mr. Holt will be nominated. He appears now to be the chief favorite of the Republicans. At the time that Mr. Seward sent for me, he also gave me some Comments of General Scott's on the Report made by Mr. Holt in relation to Major Anderson & Fort Sumter. The remarkable character of these comments induced me to ask permission (which was granted) to show them to General Dix, and I designed also to procure a copy of them for you, if possible, but I have not been able to see Mr. Seward since he sent for the paper. These Comments stated that they were written at night, at the General's quarters, and in the absence of his papers. This may account for what I suppose to be errors in respect to material facts. These errors relate—

1st. To the sending of the *Star of the West*. This is attributed to Mr. Toucey's being unwilling to furnish the *Brooklyn* for that expedition. My understanding was, that Mr. Toucey wanted to send the *Brooklyn*, and that General Scott & Mr. Holt preferred the other mode, and overruled Mr. Toucey.

2d. The second point was, that, on subsequent consultations, General Scott *urged* the sending of a military and naval force to relieve Major Anderson, but that Mr. Toucey made such difficulty about furnishing the ships that it was abandoned. My understanding was, that General Scott *never urged* the sending of any force to Sumter, but only to be ready to do so if required; and that he agreed with you, in opinion, that the state of political affairs in the border States, and the reports of Major Anderson, made it expedient *not* to send any force unless Sumter was attacked.

3d. A third point relates to what General Scott calls an informal truce entered into by you with certain persons from seceding States, under which the reinforcement of Sumter & Fort Pickens was suspended. My recollection

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 528.

in respect to that transaction is, that Mr. Holt & General Scott *concurred with you* in that arrangement, which, when proposed in Cabinet, was opposed by Judge Black & myself.

In his conversation with me, Mr. Seward mentioned that Mr. Lincoln & his Cabinet, when this subject came up, would desire me to be present, & also Mr. Holt. I told him that if *all of the late Cabinet* were requested to be present I would have no objection, but I did not think it proper *unless all* were present. He said that of course the invitation would be extended *to all*. As I never heard any thing more on the subject, I suppose that they have found it only necessary to consult Mr. Holt, who continues acting as Secretary of War. Mr. Seward has been sick for several days, but the first time that I see him, my intention is to ask for a copy of General Scott's Comments for you.

I am perfectly satisfied that Major Anderson *will be withdrawn*. Scott agrees with Anderson as to the force required to relieve Sumter, and evidently favors withdrawal of the troops. The same thing will no doubt be done in respect to Fort Pickens. The Montgomery Commissioners have not yet applied for an audience. Various conjectures are made in respect to whether they will be received. I am also convinced by the general tone prevailing here that there is not the least design to attempt any coercive measure. A continuation of your policy *to avoid collision* will be the course of the present administration. General Dix gave up the Treasury Department Thursday & went home Friday morning. He on all occasions speaks of you with kindness and regard. Mr. Holt is the only one of your Cabinet yet in office—the probability is that he will receive the nomination of Supreme Judge as a reward for what he terms his efforts to arrest the downward course of public affairs at the time he became Secretary of War. The resignations of General Cooper & Cols. Lay & Withers show that the feeling of secession in Virginia is growing stronger. Judge Campbell has his resignation prepared, and will send it in on the 15th of this month. This will be the most serious resignation that has yet occurred, not only on account of his high character and eminent qualities, but also because it affects a branch of the Government hitherto untouched by the contagion of secession.

Judge Black left town with his family yesterday. He is to return on Monday. The scramble for office is terrific. It is said that Lincoln takes the precaution of seeing no strangers *alone*. The reception on Friday is reported to have been an immense mob.

I beg you to present my compliments to Miss Lane, and shall ever remain, with sincere regard,

Yours truly,

EDWIN M. STANTON.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY JAMES BUCHANAN.

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TO MR. HOLT.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 11 March 1861.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have not heard a word from any member of my late Cabinet since I left Washington, except a letter from Mr. Stanton received yesterday. I had expected to hear often, especially from Judge Black & yourself. Meanwhile the Northern papers are teeming with what I know to be misrepresentations as to expressions used by yourself concerning my conduct. From our first acquaintance I have had the most implicit confidence in your integrity, ability, & friendship, & this remains unchanged. Pray enlighten me as to what is going on in Washington.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: J. HOLT.

TO MR. BENNETT.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 11 March 1861.

MY DEAR SIR/

Will you be kind enough to direct the Herald to be sent to me at Lancaster? I have been quite lost without it.

I am once more settled at this my quiet home, & one of my first impulses is to return you my cordial & grateful thanks for the able & powerful support which you have given me almost universally throughout my stormy & turbulent administration.

Under Heaven's blessing the administration has been successful in its foreign & domestic policy, unless we may except the sad events which have recently occurred. These no human wisdom could have prevented. Whether I have done all I could, consistently with my duty, to give them a wise & peaceful direc-

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 530.

tion towards the preservation or reconstruction of the Union will be for the public & posterity to judge. I feel conscious that I have done my duty in this respect & that I shall at last receive justice.

With my very kindest regards to Mrs. Bennett, I remain sincerely & respectfully

Your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

JAMES GORDON BENNETT, ESQ.

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FROM MR. STANTON.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, March 12/61.

DEAR SIR:

It is now the universal impression in this city that Sumter & Pickens will both be surrendered. The National Republican (Lincoln organ) says that it was determined on at the Cabinet meeting Saturday.

Enclosed I send you a slip from the N. York Tribune of Monday, 11th. Harvey, the telegraphic correspondent, is intimate & in daily association with Mr. Holt, but he surely can have no warrant for the assertion in the article referred to. Cameron was sworn into office yesterday.<sup>2</sup> The administration is now completely organized, but demands for office necessarily must occupy their chief attention. I have not seen any of the Cabinet, or any leading Senator of that party, since the date of my last letter.

Floyd is here. Russell has been discharged from the indictment against him. All accounts here represent the secession feeling in Virginia to be rapidly strengthening and extending. It would not surprise me to see Virginia out in less than ninety days, and Maryland will be close at her heels. Lincoln & the family at the White House are represented to be greatly elated at Douglas joining in defence of the new administration. It is said to be the chief topic of conversation with visitors at the Executive mansion.

You will notice in the Tribune an article signed "One who sees the Facts," which is quite sharp on Major Anderson, and the writer evidently agrees with you in respect to the Major's course. Glossbrenner started home this morning.

With great respect I remain yours truly,

EDWIN M. STANTON.

HIS EX. JAMES BUCHANAN.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 531.

<sup>2</sup> As Secretary of War.



FROM MR. HOLT.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, March 14th, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have read with amazement & much sorrow the statement contained in your kind letter of the 11th inst., just recd., that the Northern papers are teeming with misrepresentations of expressions said to have been used by myself concerning your conduct. As I read but few of these papers, it is not surprising that such calumnies should have escaped my notice, but I am astonished that they should not have been mentioned to me by some of our common friends. Having no knowledge whatever of the nature or details of these misrepresentations, of course I can offer you no explanation or refutation of them. This much, however, may be safely affirmed, that if they impute to me expressions in any degree disparaging to yourself personally or officially, they are utterly false. I gave to your administration an earnest & sincere support, first from a high sense of duty to my country, & next out of regard for yourself personally. What I thus supported I will never cease to defend.

I feel a gratitude that words cannot convey, for the declaration that in despite of all these fabrications & perversions of a profligate press your confidence remains unshaken. Be assured that I have not [done] & never will do aught unworthy of the trust that you so generously repose. I have labored to deserve your friendship, which has lavished upon me honors & distinctions, for which I am & shall continue to be grateful with every throb of my life. No greater mortification could befall me than to fear even that you regarded me insensible to these kindnesses or capable of being less than your devoted friend, now & hereafter, here & everywhere.

I think you have little reason to disquiet yourself about the calumnies of the press. The enthusiasm which greeted you in your progress homeward shows how these things have impressed the popular heart. You will not have to live long to witness the entombment of the last of the falsehoods by which your patriotic career has been assailed. If you are not spared until then, you need have no fear but that History will do you justice.

I have not met with any member of your Cabinet, except Gov. Toucey, since we separated on Monday night. I remained in the War Department until the Monday following, when Genl. Cameron was qualified. I have seen the President but once since, & then on a matter of business about which he wished the information which he supposed my connection with the War Department would supply. Having no means of *knowing* the plans & purposes of the administration, I can only say I am *well satisfied* its policy will be decidedly pacific & conciliatory. I should not be surprised to learn any morning that Fort Sumter had been evacuated. As Fort Pickens can be retained without a collision, it may be differently treated. All is tranquil here, & the tone of feeling prevailing is constantly increasing in hopefulness

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 531.

& confidence. The indications from the border States are very encouraging. The popular mind is rapidly becoming tranquillized. This accomplished, & the revolution will die out. Excitement is the aliment on which it feeds, & without this it could scarcely subsist for sixty days.

The work of transferring the offices is going on, but not rapidly or remorselessly. The temper of the Republicans seems greatly changed from what it was during their conflict for power. I believe every effort will be made to preserve the Government, & I have more hope of the result now than I have had for the last three months.

With kind regards to Miss Lane, I am, very respectfully,  
Your sincere friend,

J. HOLT.

HIS EXCELLENCY JAMES BUCHANAN.

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### FROM GENERAL DIX.<sup>1</sup>

NEW YORK, March 14, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I left Washington on Friday (Mr. Chase having relieved me on the preceding day<sup>2</sup>), went to Boston on Saturday, passed Sunday with my wife and daughter, and returned to this city on Monday. I am at this moment annoyed with the apprehension that I may be obliged to go to Washington to-morrow. If so, I will advise you of the cause.

When we parted, there was a feeling of doubt as to my friend Major Anderson. I wrote him a letter the day his despatches were received—in fact, the night after our meeting at Mr. Ould's house, in which I alluded in the strongest terms of reprobation to the treachery of some of the officers of the Government in the South, contrasting it with his own courage and constancy. I made no allusion to his despatches. I have received a letter from him which is perfectly satisfactory. I will in a few days send you copies of mine to him and his answer.

I envy you the quietude of Wheatland. There is none here. The excitements are wearisome in the extreme. The people are now agitated by the intelligence that Fort Sumter is to be abandoned. Here, I think, there will be no decided demonstration of disapproval. But in the country it will be different. The disappointment will be very great, and it will go far to turn the current against the new administration. Your record will brighten in proportion. Of course, an attempt will be made to cast the responsibility on you. But there is a complete defence, as we know.

I shall never forget the six happy weeks I passed with you. The re-

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 533.

<sup>2</sup> As Secretary of the Treasury.

membrance of your kindness, and that of Miss Lane, will always be among my brightest retrospections. Nothing would afford me so much gratification as to be able to do something in return for your contributions to my happiness and comfort. With my kind regards to her, I am, dear sir,

Sincerely and faithfully yours,

JOHN A. DIX.

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FROM MR. STANTON.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, March 14, 1861.

DEAR SIR:

Your favor was received last evening. I shall take care of it so that when required it may be returned.

There is no doubt of Sumter being evacuated. Reports say the order has gone, but that, I think, is doubtful. You will have noticed the resolution introduced yesterday by Mr. Douglas in the Senate. That looks like a comprehensive platform for relinquishing everything in the seceded States and even those that sympathize with them. To me it seems like the first step towards a strictly Northern non-slaveholding confederacy.

In the last two days nothing has occurred here to my knowledge but what you will see in the newspapers. There has been no further action in respect to the Supreme Judgeship. It is generally understood that Crittenden will not be nominated. Judge Campbell has reconsidered his resignation, and will not resign immediately. The Court adjourns to-day. I am now writing in the Supreme Court room. If the Court ever reassembles, there will be considerable change in its organization. Judge Grier went home sick two days ago. Judge McLean is reported to be quite ill. Lincoln will probably (if his administration continues four years) make a change that will affect the constitutional doctrines of the Court.

The pressure for office continues unabated. Every department is overrun and by the time that all the patronage is distributed the Republican party will be dissolved.

I hope that peace and tranquillity, with cessation from your intense labors, will long preserve you in health & happiness.

Yours truly,

EDWIN M. STANTON.

P. S. The Supreme Court have just decided Mrs. Gaines' case in her favor—four judges to three, the Chief Justice, Grier, and Catron *dissenting*. They have also decided that the Federal Government *has no power to coerce* the Governor of a State to return a fugitive from justice, although it is his duty to comply with the demand. Yrs. &c. E. M. S.

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<sup>1</sup>Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 534.

FROM MR. STANTON.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, March 16, 1861.

DEAR SIR:

Notwithstanding what has been said in the papers and the universal reports here during the last week, the order for the removal of the troops from Sumter has not, as I am assured, yet been given. Yesterday it was still under debate. Every day affords proof of the absence of any settled policy, or harmonious concert of action, in the administration. Seward, Bates, & Cameron form one wing, Chase, Miller, Blair, the opposite wing. Smith is on both sides, and Lincoln sometimes on one, sometimes on the other. There has been agreement in nothing.

Lincoln, it is complained in the streets, has undertaken to distribute the whole patronage small & great, leaving nothing to the Chiefs of Departments. Growls about Scott's "imbecility" are growing frequent.

The Republicans are beginning to think that a monstrous blunder was made in the tariff bill; and that it will cut off the trade of New York, build up New Orleans and the Southern ports, and leave the Government no revenue—they see before them the prospect of soon being without money and without credit.

But with all this, it is certain that *Anderson will be withdrawn*. I do not believe there will be much further effort to assail you. Mr. Sumner told me yesterday that Scott's *proposed order* was based upon purely military reasons and the limited military resources of the Government. The embarrassments that surrounded you they now feel; and whatever may be said against you must recoil as an argument against them. And in giving reasons for their action, they must exhibit the facts that controlled you in respect to Sumter.

Mr. Holt has gone to New York. I have not seen him. When he called on me I happened to be from home & when I called he was absent. Judge Black is here, & I suppose intends to remain for some time. He is staying at Harrison's. I hope to be able to procure a copy of Mr. Holt's letter and General Scott's comments next week, and I intend to call and see the General & have a talk with him. With sincere regard,

I remain yours truly,

EDWIN M. STANTON.

HIS EX. JAMES BUCHANAN.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 534.

FROM MR. STANTON.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, 16 March, 1861.

DEAR SIR:

Yours of yesterday was received this morning and its arrival telegraphed. I do not think there will be any serious effort to assail your administration in respect to Fort Sumter. That would imply a coercive policy on their part, and hostility to your pacific measures. The tendency of General Scott's remarks was rather to impute blame to Mr. Toucey than to any one else; and as Mr. Holt & the General concurred in everything done or omitted, their concurrence will defend you.

I will procure the papers you desire, & forward them, and will also make you a visit as soon as the illness of my child will suffer me to leave home. In the meantime, I shall write to you often and apprise you of what is going on.

Yours truly,

EDWIN M. STANTON.

TO MR. HOLT.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND 16 March 1861.

MY DEAR SIR

I have received yours of the 14th Instant and it has afforded me much gratification. The rumors to which I referred were that you had said Fort Sumter could and would have been reinforced thirty days before the end of my administration, but I had prevented, &c. &c. &c. Both Judge Black and Mr. Stanton have written me that Mr. Seward had shewn them written comments on your note to Mr. Lincoln accompanying Major Anderson's Despatches. If their memory be correct, the General has placed himself in an awkward position, as papers in my possession will prove as well as your letter concerning Thompson. I wish you could occasionally see the members of the old Cabinet and converse with them.

I have never swerved to the right or to the left from the policy enunciated in my last annual Message. Soon after I

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 535.

<sup>2</sup> Holt Papers, Library of Congress.

learned that the Collector at Charleston had resigned, I nominated a successor; but no action was taken upon the nomination. Intensely anxious that no collision should occur at Charleston which might precipitate the Country into Civil War, I was yet ever ready and willing to send reinforcements to Major Anderson had he requested them. Indeed I did this without his request, on the suggestion of General Scott at what was deemed a critical moment. The *Star of the West* was only happy in one respect, and that is that she was not sunk and no blood was shed.

Then came the peace Convention and the earnest appeal of the Legislature of Virginia to me and to the authorities of the Seceding States "to agree to abstain, pending the proceedings contemplated by the action of the General Assembly, from any and all acts calculated to produce a collision of arms between the States and the Government of the United States." This agreement I refused peremptorily to enter into; notwithstanding Mr. Tyler said, in his report to the Governor of Virginia, "that her efforts to reconstruct or to preserve depended for their success on her being permitted to conduct them undisturbed by outside collision." "He (I) replied that he (I) had in no manner changed his views as presented in his annual Message, & that he could give no pledges; that it was his duty to enforce the laws, and the whole power rested with Congress."

In truth, at all times and under all circumstances and to all persons I kept myself entirely free to reinforce Major Anderson whenever the exigency might require. In your letters to Col: Hayne of the 26 January and 6 February you tell him explicitly that "At the present moment it is not deemed necessary to reinforce Major Anderson because he makes no such request and feels quite secure in his position. *Should his safety, however, require reinforcements, every effort will be made to supply them.*" In your letter of the 6 Feb: you are still more explicit on this subject.

General Scott, to my knowledge, never submitted any plan on paper for the reinforcement of Fort Sumter. Indeed, he told me at a late period that he had never read Major Anderson's Despatches; and I advised him by all means to do so. His note to me on Sunday the 30th December to send the 250 recruits from New York, which resulted in the expedition of the *Star of the West*, is a curiosity, which I shall preserve, both for defence and



as a memento. The expedition prepared at New York under his auspices to be ready in case of emergency I know little of in detail. Of course it was blown up by Major Anderson's Despatches received on the 4th March.

I would thank you to send me a copy of your communication to President Lincoln of the 5th March.

We are living here in peace and quiet, where we should be most happy to see you. I have no trouble except that I may be called upon to defend myself against an assault from General Scott and Mr. Lincoln's administration. I am glad with all my heart that its policy seems to be pacific; because I believe that no other policy can preserve and restore the Union. Mr. Lincoln may now make an enviable name for himself and perhaps restore the Union.

Miss Lane desires to be kindly remembered to you.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: JOSEPH HOLT.

P. S. I find among my papers the enclosed copy of a letter from Gov: Pickens to Major Anderson of the 11th Jan: together with the Major's answer of the same date; and also Major Anderson's letter of the 12th June. They belong to the War Department, and ought to be returned there. They have been long since published. I do not know how they came into my possession.

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## TO GENERAL DIX.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, March 18, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 14th instant. I shall ever recollect with pleasure and satisfaction your brief sojourn with us at the White House, and with gratitude the able and successful manner in which you performed the duties of your arduous and responsible office.

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 535.

You might envy me the quiet of Wheatland were my thoughts not constantly disturbed by the unfortunate condition of our country. The question of the withdrawal of the troops from Fort Sumter at first agitated the public mind in this vicinity; but my impression is that the people are now becoming gradually reconciled to it. There is a general desire for peace. As a military movement, General Scott's name will go far to sustain Mr. Lincoln. After Major Anderson's letter, received on the 4th March, it was very doubtful whether he could be reinforced by the means within the power of the Government. The only alternative would have been, to let the Confederate States commence the war on him, and if the force had been so superior as to render successful resistance impossible, after the honor of the flag had been maintained, then to authorize him to capitulate. Indeed, I presume such, or nearly such, was the purport of the instructions.

It is probable an attempt will be made, as you suggest, to cast the responsibility on me. But I always refused to surrender the fort and was ever ready to send reinforcements on the request of Major Anderson.

I thank God that the revolution has as yet been bloodless, notwithstanding my duty, as prescribed in my annual message, has been performed as far as this was practicable.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. Dix, I remain always, sincerely and respectfully,

Your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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### FROM MR. HOLT.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, March 20th, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:

On reaching home last evening, I had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 16th inst., & now hasten to enclose the copy of my letter to the President, as requested. I think you need have no apprehension that either yourself

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 536.

or friends will be called upon for any elaborate vindication of your policy in reference to Fort Sumter; events are hurrying on too rapidly for that.

You will ere this have seen Breckinridge's speech in the Senate, connected with the movement now making by his friends in Kentucky, through an irregular popular convention gathered from the highways & hedges, to force the Legislature to the adoption of a revolutionary policy. This demonstration on his part is regarded as very significant. Kentucky voted against him, on the *suspicion* merely that he was a disunionist; after this avowal, I doubt not, her condemnation of him will be far more decided.

I very much fear an early recognition on the part of France of the new Confederacy, which, followed as it would speedily be by others, would go far to consolidate the Southern republic. The bait for the material interests of Europe has been adroitly prepared, & cannot be long resisted. But I think such a step by a friendly government, taken within ninety days after the revolt of the States, ought to be treated almost as *casus belli*.

Fort Sumter, I presume, is about to be evacuated, which will do much to allay popular excitement in South Carolina, & thus take away the aliment on which the revolution is feeding. Still, there will remain military complications in the South, for the peaceful adjustment of which fears may well be entertained.

You have my sincere thanks for your kind invitation to visit Wheatland. It would afford me the greatest pleasure to do so, & I trust that events may yet place this gratification within my reach.

Very respectfully & truly your friend,

J. HOLT.

HIS EXCLLY. JAMES BUCHANAN.

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## FROM GENERAL DIX.<sup>1</sup>

NEW YORK, March 28th, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I intended to have sent you long ere this a copy of my letter to Major Anderson, and his reply. Mine was written on the evening of the inauguration, after the consultation at Mr. Ould's; and it was intended to encourage him if he was true, or to cut him to the heart if he was false. You know, however, that I would not doubt his honor and good faith. I should have sent the correspondence last week, but I was urged to go to Washington to see Mr. Chase in regard to the new loan. The request came from the Government, and I could not decline it. I found the Secretary well informed in regard to the condition of the finances, and think he will acquit himself with credit.

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 537.

When I left (on Saturday last), I do not think the administration had any settled policy. It was merely drifting with the current, at a loss to know whether it were better to come to an anchor, or set sail. There had not been at that time a full cabinet meeting; and I know that the foreign appointments had been made without consulting the Secretary of the Treasury. I believe Mr. Lincoln is acting on the theory of advising, in regard to appointments, with the head of the Department under which they properly fall, and with none of the others.

Will you please to say to Miss — that I have the assurance she desired in regard to her nephew.

My wife and daughters are in Boston, and I am very desolate.

I think it is decided to withdraw Major Anderson, without holding your administration to any responsibility for it. The attempt, as must be seen, would not only be fruitless, but absurd.

The loan of eight millions will be taken next week on favorable terms. If the bids for the stock are not satisfactory, Mr. Chase has the alternative of issuing Treasury notes, payable in two years, and convertible into stock. This privilege of convertibility will enable him to place them at par. But it would be better, if he can get a fair price for the stock, to take it, and get the eight millions out of the way for twenty years.

I beg to be kindly remembered to Miss Lane, and am, my dear sir, with sincere regard,

Faithfully yours,

JOHN A. DIX.

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## FROM MR. STANTON.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, April 3, 1861.

DEAR SIR:

Although a considerable period has elapsed since the date of my last letter to you, nothing has transpired here of interest but what is fully detailed in the newspapers. Mr. Toucey left here last week. Judge Black is still in the city. General Dix made a short visit at the request of the Secretary of the Treasury. Mr. Holt, I think, is still here, but I have not seen him for several days. You of course saw Thompson's answer and Mr. Holt's reply. I have not had any intercourse with any of the present Cabinet except a few brief interviews with Mr. Bates, the Attorney General, on business connected with his Department. Mr. Lincoln I have not seen. He is said to be very much broken down with the pressure that is upon him in respect to appointments. The policy of the administration in respect to the seceding States

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 538.

remains in obscurity. There has been a rumor, for the last two or three days, that notwithstanding all that has been said, there will be an effort to reinforce Fort Sumter. But I do not believe a word of it. The special messenger, Colonel Lamon, told me that he was satisfied it could not be done. The new loan has been bid for, at better rates than I anticipated; and I perceive Genl. Dix was one of the largest bidders at the highest rates. The new Tariff Bill seems to give the administration great trouble; and luckily it is a measure of their own. The first month of the administration seems to have furnished an ample vindication of your policy, and to have rendered all occasion of other defence needless. The rumors from Richmond are very threatening; secession is rapidly gaining strength there. Hoping that you are in the enjoyment of good health & happiness, I remain as ever,

Yours,

EDWIN M. STANTON.

P. S. 12 o'clock. The Secretary of the Treasury has determined to reject all the bids for the new loan under \$94. This gives him \$3,099,000 only, of eight millions called for. He could have obtained the whole amount at 93½. Riggs thinks the Secretary has made a great mistake in not taking the whole sum, and that he will not get as good terms as 93½ in future. There are no bids here taken.

E. M. S.

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## FROM MR. STANTON.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, 11 [10] April, 1861.

DEAR SIR:

I am rejoiced to learn by yours of the 8th inst., received this morning, that your good health continues. Mrs. Stanton desires to return her thanks for your kind invitation. It would give her great pleasure to make you a visit, if the care of young children permitted her to leave home. Before long I hope to have the pleasure of paying my respects to you at Wheatland.

Enclosed I send you a copy of General Scott's "views," as published in the *Intelligencer*. The first I ever heard of them was when they were read in Cabinet by Floyd on the 27th of December. I have been hoping to procure for you a copy of Genl. Scott's "Observations" upon Mr. Holt's last letter respecting Sumter, but as yet have not succeeded. I saw Mr. Holt on Sunday. I had supposed he might have some knowledge of the designs of the administration & the purpose of the recent military & naval movements.

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 538.

But he said he had none. He has received a curious letter from Genl. Twiggs, the substance of which is, "that the power to dismiss an officer of the army without trial has been exercised, and he does not dispute it; but Mr. Holt has *assumed the right* to apply epithets the propriety of which he will discuss with General Holt whenever he has the honor of meeting him personally." What would he have thought of the epithet "cowardice" which you struck out of Mr. Holt's order? Mr. Seaton, when I called on him this morning, expressed his gratification to hear of your good health, & spoke of you with much kindness. He says he has no knowledge of the movements or policy of the administration but what he finds in the New York papers, has not seen Lincoln since the inauguration, and has no intercourse with the Cabinet. Dr. Gwin has just returned from Mississippi. He speaks with great confidence of the stability & power of the Confederacy, and evidently sympathizes strongly with them. Every day impresses stronger conviction upon the public mind here that armed collision will soon take place. Lincoln has appointed his partner, Col. Lamon, marshal. He is to enter upon the office Friday; & Selden says he gives as a reason for doing so immediately that apprehensions are entertained of a hostile attack upon Washington. But I think that apprehension is as groundless as the rumor that hurried Lincoln from Harrisburg to Washington.

I beg you to present my kindest regards to Miss Lane. The rumor continues rife that she is soon to return to this city. Mrs. Stanton & myself will be happy to welcome her.

I shall continue to keep you advised of anything of interest that may transpire here, and hope that your life may long be spared in health & happiness.

Yours truly,

EDWIN M. STANTON.

HIS EXCY. JAMES BUCHANAN.

P. S. 12 o'clock. It is certain that the administration is panic-stricken for some cause. They commenced this morning an active enrolment of the militia of the District. Chew, of the State Department, was sent last week to Charleston. I have just been told that he went with a formal note to Gov. Pickens—that the administration designed to succor Major Anderson—that 14 ships would be sent—that they meant only to supply provisions, but if there was any resistance forces would also be sent in. It is now reported as coming from one of the Commissioners that the *batteries have opened on Sumter*. Soldiers are also being placed in the Departments. This is the last rumor on the Avenue.

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FROM MR. STANTON.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, April 11, 1861.

DEAR SIR:

The letter of Twiggs is in accordance with his character, and shows how richly he deserved the epithet with which he would have been branded on the records of the country and before the world but for your forbearance. The cowardly effort to insult & wound you is worthy of one who betrayed his trust and traitorously surrendered the arms and colors of his Government. The idle threat to visit Lancaster shows that "braggart" is to be added to "traitor" & "coward," in order to designate his full measure of infamy.

I showed your letter & the copy of Twiggs' letter to Mr. Holt. He thought it ought to be published by you but I do not. It would be dignifying the creature too much. I enclose a copy of his letter to Mr. Holt. You will observe that the same contemptible threat of personal vengeance is made in it. But it is gratifying to know that Twiggs feels so acutely the sting of his dismissal, & that all the whitewashing of the Confederate States affords him no relief.

I have applied to the War Office for copies of the several orders relating to Twiggs, & shall probably have them to-morrow, and will forward them to you.

There is great "soldiering" in town the last two days. The yard in front of the War Office is crowded with the District Militia, who are being mustered into service. The feeling of loyalty to the Government has greatly diminished in this city. Many persons who would have supported the Government under your administration refuse to be enrolled. Many who were enrolled have withdrawn & refuse to take the oath. The administration has not acquired the confidence & respect of the people here. Not one of the Cabinet or principal officers has taken a house or brought his family here. Seward rented a house "while he should continue in the Cabinet," but has not opened it, nor has his family come. They all act as though they meant to be ready "to cut and run" at a minute's notice—their tenure is like that of a Bedouin on the sands of the desert. This is sensibly felt and talked about by the people of the city and they feel no confidence in an administration that betrays so much insecurity. And besides, a strong feeling of distrust in the candor and sincerity of Lincoln personally, and of his Cabinet, has sprung up. If they had been merely silent & secret, there might have been no ground of complaint. But assurances are said to have been given and declarations made in conflict with the facts now transpiring in respect to the South, so that no one speaks of Lincoln or any member of his Cabinet with respect or regard.

The facts about Sumter it is impossible to ascertain, for the reasons that have been mentioned, for no one knows what *to believe*. The nearest conjecture I can form is this—

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 540.

- 1st. That the Baltic has been sent with provisions for Sumter.
- 2d. That the Powhatan has been sent with forces to land & attack the batteries.
- 3d. That a *secret* expedition, independent of Genl. Scott, has been sent, under charge of Surgeon Fox, to make an effort to land in the night at Sumter.

The refusal to admit Capt. Talbot to Sumter may prevent concert of action with Major Anderson, and I think the whole thing will prove a failure. There is no excitement here. People are anxious, but the sensation telegrams sent from here are without any foundation. It is true, however, that Ben McCullough has been here on a scouting expedition, and he carefully examined all the barracks & military posts in the city, & said that he expected to be in possession of the city before long. He stayed all night at Dr. Gwin's. This has a business aspect. It is believed that a secession ordinance will be passed by the Virginia convention to-day.

Yours truly,

EDWIN M. STANTON.

HIS EXY. JAMES BUCHANAN.

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### FROM MR. STANTON.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, April 12, '61.

DEAR SIR:

We have the war upon us. The telegraphic news of this morning you will have seen before this reaches you.

The impression here is held by many,

- 1st. That the effort to reinforce will be a failure.
- 2d. That in less than 24 hours from this time Anderson will have surrendered.
- 3d. That in less than 30 days Davis will be in possession of Washington.

Yours truly,

EDWIN M. STANTON.

HIS EXCY. JAMES BUCHANAN.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 541.

TO MR. HENRY.<sup>1</sup>

[April 12, 1861.]

The Confederate States have deliberately commenced the civil war, & God knows where it may end. They were repeatedly warned by my administration that an assault on Fort Sumter would be civil war & they would be responsible for the consequences. The last of these warnings happens to be before me, & is contained in the last sentence of Mr. Holt's letter to Mr. Hayne, of February 6, 1861. It is as follows: "If, with all the multiplied proofs which exist of the President's anxiety for peace, & of the earnestness with which he has pursued it, the authorities of that State shall assault Fort Sumter, & peril the lives of the handful of brave & loyal men shut up within its walls, & thus plunge our common country into the horrors of civil war, then upon them & those they represent must rest the responsibility."

I have been entirely well since my return home until within the last few days, when I have suffered from sharp twinges of rheumatism in my legs.

With my kindest regards to your wife, I remain very affectionately

Your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

J. BUCHANAN HENRY.

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TO GENERAL DIX.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, April 19, 1861.

MY DEAR GENERAL:

I need scarcely say I was much gratified with your letter to Major Anderson, as well as with his answer. You placed, in an eloquent and striking light, before him the infamous conduct

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 541. This letter bears no date, but was evidently written about the time assigned to it. Only an extract is given, the omitted part relating to a purely private matter.

<sup>2</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 542.

of General Twiggs and others, and his response was manly and loyal. By the bye, I some time since received an insulting letter from General Twiggs, dated in Mississippi on the 30th ultimo. Its conclusion is as follows: "Your usurped right to dismiss me from the army might be acquiesced in, but you had no right to brand me as a traitor; this was personal, *and I shall treat it as such*, not through the papers, but *in person*. I shall, most assuredly, pay a visit to Lancaster, for the sole purpose of a *personal interview* with you. So, sir, prepare yourself. I am well assured that public opinion will sanction *any course* I may take with you."

I have paid no attention to this note, and entertain but little apprehension from the threats of this hoary-headed rebel. My fate, however, is, in some respects, hard. After my annual message of the 3d December, in which I made as able an argument as I could against secession, and indicated my purpose to collect the revenue and defend the Federal forts in South Carolina, etc., the Southern friends of the administration fell away from it. From the line prescribed in this message, I am not conscious that I have departed a hair's breadth, so far as it was practicable to pursue it. I was ready and willing at all times to attempt to collect the revenue, and, as a necessary preliminary, I nominated a collector to the Senate. You know the result.

After my explosion with the commissioners of South Carolina at the end of December, the Southern Senators denounced me on the floor of the Senate, but after my message to Congress of the 8th January, one of them at least abused me in terms which I would not repeat. In that message I declared that "the right and the duty to use military force defensively against those who resist the Federal officers, in the execution of their legal functions, and against those who assail the property of the Federal Government, is clear and undeniable;" and more to the same purpose.

Warning was repeatedly given that if the authorities of South Carolina should assail Fort Sumter, this would be the commencement of a civil war, and they would be responsible for the consequences. The last and most emphatic warning of this character, is contained in the concluding sentence of Mr. Holt's final and admirable answer to Mr. Hayne of the 6th of February. It is as follows: "If with all the multiplied proofs which exist

of the President's anxiety for peace, and of the earnestness with which he has pursued it, the authorities of that State shall assail Fort Sumter, and peril the lives of the handful of brave and loyal men shut up within its walls, and thus plunge our common country into the horrors of civil war, then upon them and those they represent must rest the responsibility." This letter has been published, but seems to have been forgotten. I perceive that you are to be President of the great Union meeting. Would it not be well, in portraying the conduct of South Carolina in assailing Fort Sumter, to state that this had been done under the most solemn warnings of the consequences, and refer to this letter of Mr. Holt? Nobody seems to understand the course pursued by the late administration. A quotation from Holt's letter would strengthen the hands of the present administration. You were a member of the cabinet at its date, and I believe it received your warm approbation. Hence it would come from you with peculiar propriety.

Had I known you were about to visit Washington on the business of the Treasury, I should have urged you to call at Wheatland on your return. You would then, as you will at all times, be a most welcome visitor.

They talk about keeping secrets. Nobody seems to have suspected the existence of an expedition to reinforce or supply Fort Sumter at the close of our administration.

The present administration had no alternative but to accept the war initiated by South Carolina or the Southern Confederacy. The North will sustain the administration almost to a man; and it ought to be sustained at all hazards.

Miss Hetty feels very much indebted to you, and you are frequently the subject of kind remembrances in our small family circle. Please to present my kind regards to Mrs. Dix.

From your friend always,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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FROM GENERAL DIX.<sup>1</sup>

NEW YORK 24 April 1861.

DEAR SIR:—

As Chairman of a Committee of citizens having the war in charge, every moment of my time is engrossed; and I have only time to thank you for your kind and important letter. It reached me just as I was going to the great meeting on Saturday. I enclose a paper giving my remarks. You will see the use I have made of your letter. I had no time to correct, add, or abridge, as my remarks were in type before I left the stand, and, indeed, were in circulation in the streets.

There was one passage in your letter I was very anxious to read to the meeting. I have never taken a liberty with a private letter, though I was never so strongly tempted. The sentence I allude to is this: "The present administration had no alternative but to accept the war initiated by South Carolina or the Southern Confederacy. The North will sustain the administration almost to a man; and it ought to be sustained at all hazards."

May I use the foregoing, if I think it proper & a fit occasion presents itself? Many of our political friends express great gratification at the statement your letter enabled me to make.

I will write more fully in a few days, and am, with sincere respect & regard,

Your friend,

JOHN A. DIX.

HON. JAMES BUCHANAN.

P. S. The Republicans here have behaved very well. They placed me at the head of the Committee on Resolutions, and gave a majority of the Committee to us. The Resolutions, with one exception, were drawn by me.

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TO GENERAL DIX.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, April 25, 1861.

MY DEAR GENERAL:—

I have just received your favor of yesterday, with the New York *Times* containing your remarks as president of the great Union meeting. They were excellent and appropriate, and I am

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 543.

<sup>2</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 544.



much indebted to you for them. I had read them before in the *Sunday Herald*.

Since the day and hour that I delivered my message, on the 3d December last, I have never departed from it for a single moment. The argument which it contained against secession, and the determination it expressed to collect the revenue and protect the property of the United States, produced an instantaneous alienation of the Southern Senators. After my difficulties with the South Carolina commissioners, this became a violent and settled hostility, and I was openly denounced by them on the floor of the Senate.

Supposing that Fort Sumter would then be attacked, the expedition of the *Star of the West* was organized and prepared by General Scott. Before it sailed, however, information was received from Major Anderson and some other sources, I do not recollect what, which, in the opinion of the Secretaries of War and of the Navy and General Scott, rendered it unnecessary. It was then countermanded by General Scott; but the countermand did not reach New York until after it had sailed. But you know all this.

I have no doubt of the loyalty and good faith of Major Anderson. His forbearance must be attributed to his desire of preserving peace and avoiding a hostile collision. When the Major, in a firm and patriotic manner, refused to surrender the fort to Beauregard, it seems he informed him that his provisions would last but a few days. What an outrage it was, after this information, to fire on the fort! I remain, most truly,

Your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

P. S.—In regard to the sentences in my letter, it might have been well, and I think it would have been, to read them. It is now probably too late, unless another good opportunity would seem to justify.

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TO MR. BAKER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 26 April 1861.

MY DEAR SIR/

What on earth has become of my friends in Philadelphia? It is some time since I have heard from any of them. But almost every day I receive violent, insulting, & threatening anonymous letters from that City. Now I am not easily moved; but I should like to know whether I am in danger of a personal attack from there, so that I may be prepared to meet it. They know not what they would do; because when my record is presented to the world, all will be clear as light.

In Lancaster there was at first considerable feeling against me; but that has subsided very fast. My old friends seem to be faithful & true. The speech of General Dix at New York threw some light upon the subject & had a happy effect here. This, united with General Twiggs' threatening letter, at once arrested the tide. Has the speech of General Dix been published in any of the Philadelphia papers?

My old friend, James M. Hopkins, has not been near me since my return, & I am told he is very bitter.

The officers, &, I may add, the men of the two Ohio Regiments here have the most friendly dispositions. Great numbers of them have visited me. I receive the kindest letters from New York. Is there any danger of disturbances to the public peace in Philadelphia?

What has become of Judge Black? I know not where he is. He may be still in Somerset. I wrote to him there at his own request some time ago; but have received no answer. The attack on Fort Sumter was an outrageous act. The authorities at Charleston were several times warned by my administration that such an attack would be civil war & would be treated as such. If it had been made in my time, it should have been treated as such.

From your friend as ever

JAMES BUCHANAN.

JOSEPH B. BAKER, ESQUIRE.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 545.

TO MRS. GWIN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, May 4, 1861.

MY DEAR MADAM: I have received your favor of the 26th ult., after having been many days on the way, and most sincerely and deeply sympathize with you. Still, I believe your imagination has magnified the difficulties of your situation, and you will not be exposed to the dangers you apprehend. You have had a checkered life, and I still trust your last days may be peaceful and happy.

The assault upon Fort Sumter has made us unanimous throughout the North. I often predicted that such would be the effect of so mad and reckless an enterprise. The spirit of the North has been thoroughly aroused, and they will go ahead until secession shall be suppressed and the Union restored.

I am truly sorry that your son has joined the Confederate Army. California was his State, and even upon the principles of false honor, which have actuated so many, he might therefore have remained at West Point.

We live here very much in retirement. All social visiting is at an end. Men, women, and children are all engaged in warlike pursuits. Miss Lane seems to be quite contented, and has changed her mode of life with remarkable facility. She desires me to convey her love to you and say she has received your letter and will answer it soon.

Why have you changed your purpose of returning to California? It appears to me that this was and would be your natural course. You do not like to pass through Virginia, and I do not wonder at this.

I shall ever feel the deepest interest in your prosperity and happiness. We may never meet again, but I shall ever remember with heartfelt pleasure the many happy hours we have passed together in other and better days. With sentiments of sincere regard I remain, always your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MRS. M. E. GWIN.

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<sup>1</sup> Henry's Messages of Buchanan, 304-306.

TO MR. STANTON.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, 6 May, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR/

The last two letters which I received from you are both dated on the 12th April & were acknowledged by me on the 17th. I have heard nothing either from yourself or Mr. Holt since the assault upon Fort Sumter. That you have written I entertain not a doubt, because you were to keep me advised of anything of interest which might transpire at Washington. The mails have been very irregular. Whether our friend Holt is in Washington or in Kentucky or whereabouts is unknown to this deponent. Black is somewhere, as quiet as a mouse.

The first gun fired by Beauregard aroused the indignant spirit of the North as nothing else could have done, & made us a unanimous people. I had repeatedly warned them that this would be the result. I had supposed & believed that it would be the policy of Mr. Lincoln's administration to yield to the popular impulse & banish, at least for the present, all party distinctions. In this I have been most probably mistaken. I judge from the answer of Mr. Seward, Junr., to an inquiry propounded to him about some arrangement with the enemy, in which he goes out of his way to say that the days for such things had passed away since the 4th of March. I suppose he alludes to the arrangement made not to land the forces but merely the supplies at Fort Pickens whilst the Peace Convention were in session unless the revolutionists should manifest a disposition to assail it. I have not got in my possession copies of the orders issued by Messrs. Holt & Toucey on that occasion, with the full approbation of Gen. Scott. If Mr. Holt be in Washington, I would thank you to obtain from him a copy of this military order. I shall write to Mr. Toucey to-day for a copy of the naval order.

Upon re-examination of the whole course of my administration from the 6th November, 1860, I can find nothing to regret. I shall at all times be prepared to defend it. The Southern Senators became cold after my message of the 3d December &

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 545.

bitterly hostile after my explosion with the first South Carolina Commissioners. After this our social relations ceased. And all because I would not consent to withdraw the troops from Fort Sumter nor would I agree not to reinforce them; but under all circumstances uniformly declared that I would send reinforcements whenever requested by Major Anderson or [whenever] the safety of the fort required them. I am sorry you have not been able to procure for me General Scott's critique on Mr. Holt's letter to President Lincoln. I hope Mr. Holt himself has a copy of it.

We live here in content & quiet, & see our friends in a social way. The officers of the Ohio Regiments visit us occasionally, & are quite agreeable men, & most of them are Democrats. We had a visit from Mr. Sherman yesterday.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. EDWIN M. STANTON.

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### TO MR. KENNEDY.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, LANCASTER, May 13, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR/

Many thanks for your kind letter of May 11th received this day. My letter to Mr. Seaton had no other object in view than to suggest hints to be used by him if he thought proper. I have kept no copy of it, though I have a general recollection of what it contains. If there is nothing personally harsh or offensive in it towards those officers who have abandoned their flag notwithstanding their oaths, I can perceive no objection to its publication with the explanation you propose to be given. I do not think there is anything harsh or offensive in it. I have been quite unwell for a week or ten days; the last few days I have been confined to my bed. I believe with the blessing of God I may weather this storm, though it has been severe. It is very incon-

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 546.

venient for me at the present moment, when all the world is alive, to be sick in bed. Please to present me in the kindest terms to Mr. Seaton, & believe me always to be

Sincerely and respectfully your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

JOS. C. G. KENNEDY, ESQ.

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FROM MR. STANTON.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, 16 May, 1861.

DEAR SIR:

Your letter by Mr. Magraw was received, and I designed to send an answer by him, but he left here without my knowledge.

On the 24th of April, the day after the Baltimore riot, and again on Blue Tuesday, the day before the arrival of the New York regiments, I wrote to you. These letters will probably reach you sometime, if they have not already arrived, but I regret their miscarriage, as they kept up a regular chain of Washington events from the date of Lincoln's first proclamation after the capture of Sumter, and since that time incidents have passed so rapidly that I cannot recall them in their order.

The fling of Mr. F. W. Seward about "negotiations" would merit a retort if there were an independent press and the state of the times admitted discussion of such matters. The negotiations carried on by Mr. Seward with the Confederate Commissioners through Judge Campbell & Judge Nelson will some day perhaps be brought to light, and if they were as has been represented to me, Mr. Seward and the Lincoln administration will not be in a position to make sneering observations respecting any negotiations during your administration. It was in reference to these that Jeff Davis in his message spoke with so much severity. You no doubt observed his allusion to informal negotiations through a person *holding a high station* in the Government of the United States, and which were participated in by other persons holding stations equally high. I have understood that Judge Campbell was the person alluded to, and that Judges Nelson & perhaps Catron were the other persons cognizant of Mr. Seward's assurances respecting the evacuation of Fort Sumter.

Mr. Holt is still here. Judge Black has been absent some weeks but returned night before last. Mr. Holt stays at home pretty closely, and I have met him very seldom though I occasionally hear of his visiting some of the Departments. The state of affairs is tolerably well detailed in the public

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 547.



prints. But no description could convey to you the panic that prevailed here for several days after the Baltimore riot, and before communications were reopened. This was increased by reports of the trepidation of Lincoln that were circulated through the streets. Almost every family packed up their effects. Women & children were sent away in great numbers; provisions advanced to famine prices. In a great measure the alarm has passed away, but there is still a deep apprehension that before long this city is doomed to be the scene of battle & carnage.

In respect to military operations going on or contemplated, little is known until the results are announced in the newspapers. General Scott seems to have carte blanche. He is in fact the Government, and if his health continues, vigorous measures are anticipated.

For the last few days I have been moving my family, my former residence being made unpleasant by troops & hospitals surrounding me. In the present state of affairs I do not like to leave home or I would pay you a visit, but no one knows what may happen any day, or how soon the communications may be again interrupted. Marching and drilling is going on all day in every street. The troops that have arrived here are in general fine-looking, able-bodied, active men, well equipped, and apparently ready & willing for the service in which they are engaged.

Your cordial concurrence in the disposition to maintain the Government & resist aggression gives great satisfaction, and I am pleased to observe a letter from you in the *Intelligencer* of this morning.

I beg you to present my compliments to Miss Lane. There are many stories afloat among the ladies in the city that would amuse her, but as they are no doubt told her by lady correspondents, it is needless for me to repeat them.

I hope you may continue in the enjoyment of good health, & remain with sincere regard

Yours truly,

EDWIN M. STANTON.

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## TO MR. HENRY.<sup>1</sup>

(*Confidential.*)

WHEATLAND, LANCASTER,

Friday, May 17, 1861.

MY DEAR JAMES,

I have been quite unwell for the last fortnight—during the last week I have been in bed; still, thank God, I believe I am now convalescent, though as yet I am exceedingly weak. I should be

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; printed in part in Curtis's *Buchanan*, II. 548.

glad to see you here on private & public business, but not if your absence should operate seriously to your prejudice. We should also be happy to see Mr. Schell here. The termination of the late administration ought not to break up the bonds of mutual friendship which it produced. Of course, should you find it convenient to come on here, it would be at my expense. There is no part of my administration which was considered with greater care & pursued with more firmness than that between the 6th Nov., the day of Mr. Lincoln's election, & the 4th of March last. Although nearly all upon record, the public seem to have forgotten it. It has become necessary now to revive the public memory, & I know of no journal in the country so proper to do this as the Journal of Commerce. Mr. Hallett, of that valuable paper (I believe I am correct in spelling the name<sup>1</sup>), has always been a friend. I would thank you to call upon him, present him my kind & grateful regards, & say that with his permission I will send him some documents. There never was a moment of time when my administration were not ready & willing to reinforce, or attempt to reinforce, & supply Fort Sumter if Maj. Anderson had called for such reinforcement or supply. On the 6th of Nov., when Lincoln was elected, the whole force at my command was just five companies, & neither of them full. They did not exceed in the whole 300 men. The Herald, however, from a spirit of malignity, & supposing that the world may have forgotten the circumstances, takes every occasion to blame me for my supineness. It will soon arrive at the point of denouncing me for not crushing out the rebellion at once, & thus try to make me the author of the war. Whenever it reaches that point, it is my purpose to indict Bennett for libel. I do not wish you to be concerned professionally in the matter, but I want to employ a trustworthy agent to purchase the papers as they appear & thus furnish the evidence. My late District Attorney, Mr. Roosevelt, is the gentleman whom I ought to employ, but I presume the intimate relations between my good friend Mrs. Roosevelt & the Bennetts would render it disagreeable to him. No extent of abuse, general or particular abuse, that Bennett could pour out upon me would induce me to prosecute him, but this is an attempt to bring not only my character

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<sup>1</sup> It was Hallock.

but my life into danger by malignant falsehood. It is one of those great national prosecutions, such as have occurred in this & other countries, necessary to vindicate the character of the Government.

I want you to bring on with you Wheaton's Elements of International Law—the seventh edition & no other. I see it is published for sale in Boston at \$6, & presume it can be had in New York. If the Journal of Commerce publishes a tri-weekly paper, please to have it sent on to me immediately. You might confidentially & quietly consult with Mr. Roosevelt whom it is best to employ to conduct this business in its preliminary stages.<sup>1</sup>

Yours affectionately

JAMES BUCHANAN.

J. B. HENRY, ESQ.

## FROM MR. STANTON.<sup>2</sup>

WASHINGTON, May 19, 1861.

DEAR SIR:

You will see in the New York papers Judge Campbell's report of the negotiations between himself and Mr. Seward to which I referred in my letter of last week. They had been related to me by the Judge about the time they closed. Mr. Seward's silence will not relieve him from the imputation of deceit & double dealing in the minds of many, although I do not believe it can justly be imputed to him. I have no doubt he *believed* that Sumter would be evacuated as he stated it would be. But the war party overruled him with Lincoln, and he was forced to give up, but could not give up his office. That is a sacrifice no Republican will be apt to make. But this correspondence shows that Mr. Frederick Seward was not in the line of truth when he said that negotiations ceased on the 4th of March. The N. Y. Ev. Post is very severe on Judge Campbell, and very unjustly so, for the Judge has been as anxiously & patriotically earnest to preserve the Government as any man in the United States, and he has sacrificed more than any Southern

<sup>1</sup> Curtis, Life of Buchanan, II. 549, states that Mr. Buchanan's purpose to institute a prosecution for libel was abandoned by the advice of friends.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 549.

man rather than yield to the secessionists. I regret the treatment he has received from Mr. Seward & the Post.

Nothing new has transpired here since my last letter. I am perfectly convinced that an attack will be made and a battle fought for this city before long.

With sincere regard I remain

Yours truly,

EDWIN M. STANTON.

HIS EXCY. JAMES BUCHANAN.

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### TO MR. HOLT<sup>1</sup>.

WHEATLAND, LANCASTER, May 21, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR

I am still confined to my room and for the most part to my bed. I believe I am convalescent but am extremely weak, and think I gain strength very slowly, and almost imperceptibly.

The time has certainly arrived when in justice to myself and to the members of my Cabinet I must prepare, or have prepared under my immediate direction, an authentic statement of the events of the Administration from the 6th of November, the day on which Mr. Lincoln was elected, until the 4th of March last.

Such a statement will be a perfect justification of my course and will relieve me from the imputations that are made against me. From the time you became acting Secretary of War until the end of my Administration, you acted a most important part in the administration of the Government. It would be almost impossible to prepare a statement with a sufficient degree of accuracy without your presence. You made much character during this period which ought not to be lost. If Providence were to call me away from this world before such a statement, the truth in its full extent might never be known. I therefore earnestly invite you to pay me a visit as soon as you can conveniently. It would be the most natural thing in the world for a member of my Cabinet, with whom my relations had always been so intimate, to pay me a visit in my sickness. I shall

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<sup>1</sup> Holt Papers, Library of Congress.

specialty want copies of the papers on files of the War and Navy Departments relative to Fort Pickens, and also a statement of the preparations made for the reinforcement and supply of Fort Sumter at the time we received last despatches from Maj. Anderson. By the by, have you seen and conversed with Maj. Anderson? What is the meaning of the approval of all his conduct at Fort Sumter by the Administration? I have no doubt this was dictated by the most laudable desire to avoid collision and spare the effusion of human blood, but why should Maj. Anderson's conduct be approved and ours condemned by the Administration? We were ready and willing to send him reinforcements whenever he applied for them.

We have not a gay household, but we will give you a cheerful welcome. I should press Mr. Stanton to accompany you, but he has a wife and family in Washington, which of course he would be very unwilling to leave at the present crisis.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. J. HOLT.

P. S. The time of publication of such a statement would be a matter of future consideration—its preparation is a necessity.

J. B.

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### FROM MR. HOLT.<sup>1</sup>

(Confidential.)

WASHINGTON, May 24th, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:

I had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 21st inst. from the hands of Mr. Magraw. I had previously observed with pain notices in the public papers of your illness, & it is therefore with great gratification that I learn you are convalescing though still confined to your room.

I thank you sincerely for your kind invitation to visit Wheatland, & regret much that it is not in my power at once to do so. My engagements, however, are such that I cannot leave Washington for the present, though I hope to be able to see you in the course of the summer.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 550.

I would gladly give you any assistance in my power in the preparation of the paper to which you refer, but fear any aid I could render would be of little avail to you. I have preserved no memoranda of the transactions you propose to treat, & although my memory might be trusted as to their substance, it would in all probability be at fault in regard to their details. In reference to the latter, I would rather defer to your own recollection, or to that of other members of the cabinet.

As a *historical* document, I concur with you that the preparation of such a document is a "necessity," but I cannot perceive that there is any reason for haste in its completion, or any expediency in its early publication. The country is so completely occupied by the fearful & absorbing events occurring & impending, that you could not hope at present to engage its attention. Besides, from what I have observed in the public papers, I cannot discover that your administration is being so assailed upon the points alluded to as to require any elaborate vindication at your hands.

In the composition of this paper, I think a great embarrassment will be encountered in assigning a proper position to those members of your cabinet now engaged in the prosecution of active hostilities against the gov't. of the U. States. With the lights now before the public, they have pronounced a judgment upon these men as members of your administration, with a unanimity altogether unparalleled. Any vindication you might present which should either ignore or seek to controvert this judgment would receive no favor & probably but little credit with the country. I suppose you have seen the prominent Southern papers—including Gov. Floyd's organ at Richmond—in which is set forth as his especial glory the aid given to the revolution by the War Dept. during the year 1860.

You have, I believe, copies of all Anderson's letters, & it may be copies also of a part of those recd. from Fort Pickens. As the fate of the latter fortress is still undetermined, I doubt if the gov't. would give copies of any correspondence in regard to it. Col. Anderson's letters & those to him from the gov't. during my brief connection with the War Dept., furnish, I think, a sufficient defence of the policy pursued during that time. I cannot say the same in reference to an antecedent period. You no doubt remember the character of Col. A.'s letters before he was forced to abandon Moultrie—also your extreme solicitude on the subject, & the disposition made of the question of reinforcement by Gov. Floyd.

While the country will accord to you a high patriotic purpose in the forbearing course you pursued, it has also, I am satisfied, arrived at the conclusion, from current events, that the policy was a mistaken one. The counsels under which you acted were sincerely confided in by yourself, but it is now shown that they were given by traitors, who in all they did & said acted in the interest of those who had resolved upon the overthrow of the gov't. I am myself satisfied that had the same bold step been taken at Charleston in Nov. that has been recently taken at St. Louis, the revolution would ere this have been dead as any antediluvian.

I have had two brief but satisfactory interviews with Col. Anderson. He is thoroughly loyal, & if he ever had any sympathy with the revolutionists—which I am now far from believing—I think the ferocious spirit in which



the siege & cannonade of Sumter were conducted crushed it out of him. We did not discuss at all the policy of your administration in regard to Sumter, but he said in general terms that he was satisfied all that had occurred was providential—that the course pursued had been the means of fixing the eyes of the nation on Sumter & of awakening to the last degree its anxieties for its fate, so that when it fell its fall proved the instrumentality of arousing the national enthusiasm & loyalty, as we now see them displayed in the eager rush made to maintain the honor of the flag. The approval of his course, of which you speak, relates, I presume, to his defence of Sumter. I have not heard that the administration has expressed any formal censure of your policy.

Now that the South has begun an unprovoked & malignant war upon the U. States, accompanied by an insolent threat of the capture of Washington, & with an open avowal that the only Southern right now insisted on is the right of dismembering the republic, I am decidedly in favor of prosecuting the struggle until the citizens of the seceded States shall be made to obey the laws as we obey them. I believe it can be done. It will cost much blood & many millions of treasure, but if it cost billions, the preservation of such a government would be well worth the expenditure.

With kind remembrances to Miss Lane, I am very sincerely your friend,

J. HOLT.

HIS EXCLLY. JAMES BUCHANAN.

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## FROM GENERAL DIX.<sup>1</sup>

NEW YORK, May 28th, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

Ever since I wrote you last I have been busy night and day, and am a good deal worn down by my labors on the Union Defence Committee, and by superintending the organization and equipment of nine regiments, six of which I have sent to the field, leaving three to go to-morrow and the day after. The post of Major General of Volunteers was tendered to me by Governor Morgan, and I could not decline without subjecting myself to the imputation of hauling down my flag, a thing altogether inadmissible. So I am in harness for the war, though the administration take it easy, for I have not yet been accepted, and there are rumors that there are too many Democratic epaulettes in the field. There seems to be no fear at Washington that there are too many Democratic knapsacks. New York has about 15,000 men at the seat of war, without a general except Sanford, who has gone on temporarily. How is it, my dear sir, that New York is always overlooked (or nearly always) except when there are burdens to be borne? As to this

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 551.

Generalship, it was unsought, and I am indifferent about it entirely. I am willing to give my strength and my life, if need be, to uphold the Government against treason and rebellion. But if the administration prefers some one else to command New York troops, no one will acquiesce half so cheerfully as myself.

I should be very glad if I could look in upon you, though it were but for a moment; but if I am ordered South, I suppose I shall be needed at once. My whole division will be in the field by Sunday next.

Miss Lane has not made her promised visit. I will merely suggest the inviolability of promises by keeping my own. I engaged to send her a photograph for her second album, and beg to give her, through you, the choice of a variety. I beg also to be most cordially remembered to her. Our excellent friend, Mr. —, wanted a note or letter of Major Anderson's, written at Fort Sumter, and I take the liberty, not knowing his address, to send it to you.

I fear the impatience of the country may interfere with General Scott's plan of getting a large force on foot, disciplining it thoroughly until October, and then embodying it, and marching through the Southern country in such numbers as to render resistance vain. Partisan movements without any definite result only serve to irritate and excite to new effort.

I am, my dear sir, with best wishes, in which my wife unites,

Sincerely and faithfully your friend,

JOHN A. DIX.

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## FROM JUDGE BLACK.<sup>1</sup>

SOMERSET, June, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have thought carefully over the matter of which we spoke at Wheatland when I was there; namely, the preparation of a true and fair historical account of your public life and especially that part of it which you spent in the great office of President. I think you owe it to your friends and to your country to give them a full and clear vindication of your conduct & character. If this be not done, you will continue to be slandered for half a century to come. In the mean time nothing is easier than a perfect defence of every important measure which you ever adopted or carried out—nothing plainer than the task of putting the responsibility where it properly belongs for every misfortune which the country had fallen into. Nevertheless, it will be a work of much labor and time—that is, if it be done well, as it ought

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Extracts printed in Henry's Messages of Buchanan, 299. In the date, the day of the month is not given.

to be. Any one could soon & easily get up a compilation of documents & letters with such a statement of facts as might be necessary merely to connect them. But in my opinion that would be utterly unworthy of the subject. Nobody would read it. It should be a compact narrative of what occurred in Congress, in the executive departments, in the country at large; readable, attractive, and interesting to all—comprehensive in its scope, accurate in its detail, vigorous enough to be convincing, and yet impartial enough to prevent the authority of it from being impugned.

“Though deep yet clear, though gentle yet not dull,  
Strong without rage, without o’erflowing full.”

If such a thing could be produced, no matter when, it would be the standard authority for everything that concerns your times and particularly for what concerns yourself. It would be a work which this generation would appreciate, and which even in future times “the world would not willingly let die.”—No intelligent man could fail to be interested in the scenes which preceded the downfall of the great republic or in tracing the causes which produced that awful calamity. What could be more useful than a faithful analysis of the factions by which the country has been torn asunder—a true description of those base combinations of demagogues who fought for the spoils of the government while the government itself was perishing? And is there any man who would not be excited more or less by a picture (if well drawn) of an honest Chief Magistrate struggling against the perils of that terrific time, with a wild, fierce throng of slanderers assailing him in front, and hanging on his flank and rear, to defeat every movement he made for the preservation of the Union?

But who is to do this?—I certainly do not pretend that I have the qualities which would enable me to execute the plan of which I have given this imperfect outline. Most assuredly I will not undertake it without your approbation, encouragement, and material aid. I feel deeply interested in the subject, to be sure, and think it the best chance for making a literary reputation that I have ever seen or thought of. But I cannot afford to indulge in such ambition; or indeed in ambition of any kind except that of maintaining my family.

It will take years to accomplish the work according to my idea of what it should be. It should be a regular biography—starting with your first entrance into life, passing of course lightly over your professional achievements but giving rather a full account of your Congressional and diplomatic career—so that the reader may know what manner of man you were at the time of your election to the Presidency.

The objection which will arise in your mind is that this will require so long a time for its completion that one of the objects—an early vindication of your character—will be defeated. But that is provided for in my programme. I propose to prepare that portion of it which may now be needed, at once, and print it whenever it is deemed desirable to do so in any form that may be thought necessary. But I will not consent to publish the whole as a whole until I have time to give it as perfect a form as I can.

You know the reasons which compel me to treat this as a matter of business, which otherwise would be a mere labor of love. Now, therefore, let me speak of it as business.

You have my note for \$2000. Let that stand, and I will pay you the interest on it during your life. But let me have \$1500—now or at any time during the present year—and at your death remit me the \$2000 debt, and give to my family \$3500.

If you agree to this I will immediately move to York or Lancaster, and during the present summer and next winter devote most of my time to the business, with all the aid I can command.

I fear you will be startled at the magnitude of the sums I have mentioned. But reflect a little before you decide that I am wrong. If business revives and I am engaged in the practice of the law, I will lose more than I will gain by such a contract. If the worst comes to the worst and I am driven to literary labor for a support, I have before me and waiting my acceptance an engagement by which I can take the 100 volumes of Penn. Reports, condense them into 15, and get \$1000 per volume. The labor of this would be much less than writing two volumes of biography, because it would consist (nine-tenths of it) in mere clipping and copying.

The only trouble about this is that you have no security for the satisfactory completion of the work. I may die, or other causes may prevent the completion of it. I think you ought to trust that much to Providence and me together. But you can, if you think proper, make that part of the contract which is to take effect after your death conditional.

Again: We must for obvious reasons be distinctly understood that I am not acting as your mere amanuensis or servant—that it is not an autobiography, but a thing for which I am responsible in my proper person. I am therefore to be the judge of what shall go in and what shall be left out, and to express my own views and opinions. Of course you can have no doubts about my willingness to do you justice. The great danger would be the contrary—that is, that I would do you more than justice. But we might differ on some points about other men—and I say again I must have as large a charter as the wind to blow on whom I please.

One thing more: If ill health or other misfortune should prevent me from finishing it, I must be permitted to designate some competent person to close it, so that my family may not lose what I shall have done.

I hope the length of this letter will not vex you. If you approve what it contains, a single line to that effect will reach me at Washington, and I will conduct myself accordingly. Any other arrangement which you may think better will of course be received in the best spirit. I have no fears indeed that you will think of anything which I do not approve of. In any event, I hope you will speak frankly. If I am wrong, tell me so, and I will mend myself as well as I can.

Ever your friend

J. S. BLACK.

[With the foregoing letter, among the Buchanan Papers, is the following piece, marked, in pencil, "Judge Black—Events of 1860-61."]

It is perhaps not to be expected that in times like these justice will be done to the characters of individuals. In the tempest of passion the voice of reason must be content for a while to remain unheard. Nevertheless, it appears somewhat extraordinary that a man who has filled so large a space in the public eye as the late President of the United States should be so grossly and perseveringly misrepresented. I do not see the motive or the reason, nor can I perceive what good to any person or party can come out of it. On the contrary, it must be manifest that every falsification of history is calculated to do evil.

Mr. Buchanan is charged with having caused this war. What act of his had any agency in producing it? He did not elect Mr. Lincoln; he had no hand in making the Chicago platform; he did not inaugurate the irrepressible conflict between the North and South; he did not advise the formation of a sectional party. So far, therefore, as these things may have tended to produce strife and ill blood between different parts of the country, he is guiltless.

When Southern men professed to be aggrieved by the supposed hostility of their Northern brethren, did Mr. Buchanan encourage them in their false resentment? When they declared themselves the objects of a lawless and unconstitutional persecution, did he foster their delusion? When they claimed the right of secession, did he concede the justice of their reasoning? No, verily. His message of December, 1860, contains the most earnest appeal that ever was made to the heart and mind of the South against the madness of the secession doctrine. The records of this government contain no paper which so completely exhausts the arguments in favor of the Union. Then it is not by concessions to the South nor by the want of his influence in opposition to their measures that he has caused the public troubles.

But (say some) he ought to have stopped the secession movement by force. I admit that if he had had a military power at his command sufficient to quell the insurrection, if he could lawfully have used that power, and if being used it would have had the effect of preserving the Union of the States, then he did come short of his duty, and deserves at least some of the abuse which has been poured upon his head. But I deny utterly the premises from which alone this conclusion can be drawn.

It will hardly be pretended that he ought to have garrisoned all the forts and placed a guard around each of the arsenals, navy yards, and custom houses of the Southern States. That would have taken an army of at least 30,000 men. Our army, in fact, contained about 12,000 men, and more than nine tenths of them were on the distant frontiers. The general in command about the first of November reported only five companies as being available for this Southern service. Even so late as February, when the capital was supposed to be in danger, not more than 635 men of the regular army could be got there, though the general was not limited by any order of the President, and though he expressed the belief that 10,000 might be necessary. No reasonable man can doubt that if Mr. Buchanan had attempted to call out the militia of the States without any law for that purpose, or if he had increased the regular army by unauthorised enlistments, these acts would have been denounced as tyrannical and high-handed usurpations. He was obliged, then, to confine himself to the use of five companies.

But it is said he might with these five companies have so strengthened the garrisons of the forts in Charleston Harbor that the rebellion there would have been extinguished and never would have made any further progress. Is this true?

There were three forts in that harbor. There was one company there already. Five more would have made in all between four and five hundred men. Neither Castle Pinckney nor Fort Moultrie (certainly not the latter) could have been held by less than a thousand men each, for both of them were not only accessible but almost undefended on the land side. A defence of them with five hundred men against a serious attack would have been ridiculous. Even if the force had been sufficient for purposes of mere defence, how would that have "crushed the rebellion"? It would not have protected the Custom House and the Post Office and the Arsenal, and it would not have dispersed the Convention, nor changed the hearts of the people who were known to be fatally bent on dissolving the Union, nor would it have deprived South Carolina of the sympathies of the other Slave States. On the contrary, a reinforcement of those places inadequate to a proper defence would have been an invitation for an attack. A hostile collision would have become inevitable, and that would have been the signal for a general uprising of the North and the South in hostility to one another, just as that very cause did produce the present state of things. In other words, the events of April would have been precipitated in December, and the general war which we now have on our hands would have begun three months earlier than it did. Is Mr. Buchanan to be blamed for not taking that decisive and inevitable step? On the contrary, does it not seem like the conduct of a wise man and a true patriot to have paused upon the bank of the Rubicon? The insurrectionary spirit had not then spread beyond the cotton States. There was a deep-seated dissatisfaction but no determination to revolt in the other Southern States. The border States were for compromise, conciliation, and settlement, and the public sentiment of the North was in favor of all reasonable and proper concessions.

Under these circumstances it was that Mr. Buchanan received the assurances of the So. Car. delegation that no attack would be made by that State on any of the forts at Charleston. Was he not right to accept that assurance and act upon it? After Maj. Anderson removed into Fort Sumter, he repeatedly declared that no reinforcements nor provisions were necessary, and expressed the wish that none might be sent—as well as the opinion that an attempt to send them would do harm to him and not good.

Over and above all these considerations, there is one other, of overwhelming weight. Congress was in session, and was fully informed of every fact which it is supposed ought to have induced a different policy. They were dumb. They too looked forward to a peaceful settlement, and seemed to approve the course of the President.

Mr. Buchanan was in a situation of dread responsibility. He saw his country distracted, divided, and torn by political factions. He could have plunged the two sections into a civil war as easily as a man with a match in his hand might explode a magazine of gunpowder. If he had done so, the whole world and all posterity would have regarded him as the author of his



country's ruin—as the base traitor who had destroyed the hope of peace at the last moment of his official life, and left to his successor the legacy of a conflict which must send the Union to destruction. At the same time, he must have known that the course he did adopt would be misconstrued, as it has been, and expose him to all the misconstruction which it has received. A mere politician, a demagogue, a self-seeking man, might have found some escape from this dilemma, but a statesman, honest and true, could only do what his conscience dictated and leave the event to his God.

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FROM MR. STANTON.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, June 8, 1861.

DEAR SIR:

Your friends here are very much gratified by Judge Black's report of improvement in your health. The accounts we have had occasioned a great deal of solicitude concerning you; but I trust that you may now be speedily restored. I have not written to you for some time because there was nothing to communicate that would cheer or gratify you. While every patriot has rejoiced at the enthusiastic spirit with which the nation has aroused to maintain its existence and honor, the speculation and fraud that immediately spring up to prey upon the volunteers, and grasp the public money as plunder and spoil, has created a strong feeling of loathing and disgust. And no sooner had the appearance of imminent danger passed away, and the administration recovered from its panic, than a determination became manifest to give a strict party direction, as far as possible, to the great national movement. After a few Democratic appointments, as Butler & Dix, everything else has been exclusively devoted to black Republican interests. This has already excited a strong reactionary feeling not only in New York, but in the Western States. General Dix informs me that he has been so badly treated by Cameron, and so disgusted by the general course of the administration, that he intends immediately to resign. This will be followed by a withdrawal of financial confidence and support to a very great extent. Indeed, the course of things for the last four weeks has been such as to excite distrust in every Department of the Government. The military movements, or rather inaction, also excite great apprehension. It is believed that Davis & Beauregard are both in this vicinity—one at Harper's Ferry, the other at Manassas Gap—and that they can concentrate over sixty thousand troops. Our whole force does not exceed forty-five thousand. It is also reported that discord exists between the Cabinet & General Scott, in respect to important points of

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 552.

strategy. Our condition, therefore, seems to be one of even greater danger than at any former period, for the consequence of success by the secessionists would be far more extensive and irremediable than if the Capital had been seized weeks ago. Ould is reported as having gone off & joined the secessionists. Harvey, the new minister to Spain, it is discovered, was a correspondent with the secessionists, and communicated the designs & operations of the Government to Judge McGrath. It is supposed he will be recalled. Cassius Clay has been playing the fool at London by writing letters to the Times, which that paper treats with ridicule & contempt. The impression here is, that the decided & active countenance & support of the British Government will be given to the Southern Confederacy. Mr. Holt is still here, but I seldom see him. Judge Black is also here. I should have visited you, but dare not leave town even for one night. Our troops have slept on their arms nearly every night for a week, anticipating attack. Hoping to hear of your restoration to good health, I remain as ever

Truly yours,

EDWIN M. STANTON.

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### FROM MR. STANTON.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, June 12, 1861.

DEAR SIR:

I had written to you the day before your letter was received, and am very glad to learn that your health is still improving. Shortly after the 4th of March I saw Mr. Weaver, and told him to let me know in case there should appear any disposition to interfere with him, and I would exert myself to have him retained. He expressed himself so confidently of his security, that any interposition of mine would have appeared gratuitous, if not impertinent. But before your last letter reached here, he called & said he had been removed. He said he did not desire to be reinstated in it, preferring to enter the military service, and desiring a Captain's commission. While I think his restoration might be accomplished, the other is more doubtful, as it is generally understood that Mr. Cameron has bestowed all the military posts. I shall, however, do all in my power to accomplish what Mr. Weaver desires, on account of the interest you take in his welfare.

We have this morning disastrous news from Fortress Monroe. The rumor is that the sacrifice of life at Bethel Bridge was very great, and it is in a great measure attributed to the incompetence of the commanding officer. There is much reason to fear that other disasters from similar cause will occur. The recent appointments in the army are generally spoken of with

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 553.

great disapprobation. General Dix is very much chagrined with the treatment he has received from the War Department, and on Saturday I had a letter declaring his intention to resign immediately. He would, in my opinion, be a serious loss to the service. The rumored appointment of *Cummings of the Bulletin* as Brigadier General and Quarter Master General has produced very general dissatisfaction and distrust. The appointment has been announced as having been certainly made, but I do not believe that it has been.

I had a letter this week from your friend General Harney. He feels himself very badly treated by the administration. Last month he was ordered to Washington without any reason but suspicion of his loyalty. Being satisfied on that point he was restored to his command, and is now again superseded, without any explanation, and is disgraced by being left without any command.

Since this letter was commenced the brother of General Butler has arrived from Fort Monroe, and reports the whole loss of our troops at fourteen killed and forty-four wounded. This is so greatly below the former reports, which set down our loss at over one thousand, that it affords great relief. There is great anxiety to hear from Harper's Ferry. The movement in that direction a few days ago you have no doubt seen in the papers. Much apprehension is felt here as to the expedition, and there is some uneasiness lest an attack on this city will be induced by withdrawal of so large a portion of the military force. Harvey's treachery is much talked of. The foreign indications by yesterday's steamer are considered more favorable than heretofore.

I beg you to present my compliments to Miss Lane, & with sincere regard I remain

Yours truly,

EDWIN M. STANTON.

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## FROM MR. STANTON.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, June 20, 1861.

DEAR SIR:

On the day that my last letter was written I had an interview with Secretary Smith in relation to Mr. Weaver, and explained to him the nature of the service you had rendered to Mr. Lincoln, and also the engagement that Mr. Doolittle had made *after* that service had been rendered and as an expression of his sense of the obligation. Mr. Doolittle had also placed a letter on file, as he promised to do, but not making any explanation.

I am gratified to learn this morning that Mr. Weaver has been restored

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 554.

to his clerkship, and also that he has received an appointment as 1st Lieutenant in the army, for which I applied on his behalf. You will no doubt be pleased that the administration has properly appreciated the favor you rendered.

Hoping that your health is still improving, I remain

Yours truly,

EDWIN M. STANTON.

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### FROM GENERAL DIX.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, June 28, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

It is with great gratification that I am assured, from several sources, that your health is improving. I was not aware, until I received your letter, that you had been so ill, for I place but little reliance on what the newspapers say.

After a long delay I received my appointment as Major General. The President, whom I saw the day before yesterday, assured me that it was not intentional, and that he had no other purpose than to appoint me. I shall enter on my active duties in a few days.

Everything is quiet in this city. As late as last evening the enemy was also quiet and, I think, has no intention of advancing. The weather is very warm, as it always is here in June, and the season for active operations will soon be over, until after the first frost.

I hope Miss Lane is well, and that your health may be completely restored. I beg you to give her my kind regards, and to accept assurances of my sincere respect. I am, dear Sir,

Unchangeably your friend,

JOHN A. DIX.

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### TO MR. HALLOCK.<sup>2</sup>

(*Private.*) WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 29 June, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR/

My nephew, J. Buchanan Henry, informed me of the very satisfactory conversation with you some time since. I should have written to you some time ago but for my long illness.

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 556.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 555.

Since I have been able to write I have been making memoranda so as to present in one connected view the acts of my administration since the troubles commenced in South Carolina. When presented, (but the proper time has not, I think, arrived,) they will, unless I am greatly mistaken, prove to be a triumphant vindication in every particular.

In the meantime it is asked why I did not nip this great revolution in its bud, by garrisoning the Forts in the Southern States & sending reinforcements to Forts Moultrie, Sumter, & Castle Pinckney, in the harbor of Charleston. I shall let General Scott answer this question. I send you a copy of his "Views," addressed to the War Department & finally published at length, doubtless under his own authority, in the National Intelligencer of January 18th, 1861. They are dated on the 29 & 30 October, 1860, more than a week before the Presidential election. After reading them you will admit that they constitute an extraordinary Document. Indeed, they tend to prove what has been often said of the gallant General, that when he abandons the sword for the pen he makes sad work of it. They were extensively published & commented upon in the South, but attracted but little attention in the North. My present purpose, however, is only to prove from them the utter impossibility of garrisoning these Forts.

You will observe that on the 29th October he enumerates nine of them in six of the Southern States; but he submits no plan for this purpose & designates no troops to accomplish this great & extensive military operation. This it was his duty to do as Lieutenant General. In writing the next day, on the 30th October, he seems to have been struck with the absurdity of the recommendation. In this supplement he states: "There is one regular Company at Boston, one here at the Narrows, one at Portsmouth, one at Augusta, Ga., & one at Baton Rouge, *in all five companies only within reach* to garrison or reinforce the Forts mentioned in the 'Views.'" Five companies containing less than 400 men to garrison and reinforce nine fortifications scattered over six of the Southern States!

Nearly the whole of our small army were at the time stationed on the remote frontiers of our extensive country to protect the inhabitants & emigrants against the tomahawk & scalping knife of the savage; & at the approach of winter could not have

been brought within reach for several months. They were employed for this purpose as they had been for years. At the period when our fortifications were erected, it was not contemplated that they should be garrisoned, except in the event of a foreign war, & this to avoid the necessity of raising a large standing army. No person then dreamed of danger to the States. It is a remarkable fact that after months had elapsed & we had, at the instance of General Scott, scoured the whole Country for forces to protect the inauguration, all the troops we could assemble at Washington, rank & file, amounted to six hundred & thirty. This fact is stated by me in a message to the House of Representatives.

To have sent four hundred men to Charleston after the Presidential election to garrison & defend three Forts, an Arsenal, a Custom House, Navy Yard, & Post Office would have only been to provoke collision. I believed that the public property was safer without than it would have been with such an utterly inadequate force. Besides, whoever was in Washington at the time must have witnessed the strong expression of sentiment by the other Southern States against any attack by South Carolina against the public property. For this reason, it was not their policy to make the attack. In my message, therefore, of the 3 Dec: I stated: "It is not believed that any attempt will be made to expel the United States from this property by force." In this belief I was justified by the event—as there was no trouble until after Major Anderson retired from Fort Moultrie to Fort Sumter, as he had a right to do, first having spiked his cannon & burnt the gun carriages.

But I am proceeding beyond what I had intended, which was to state the impossibility of reinforcing the Forts with the troops "within reach." There are other very important questions arising out of these transactions which for the present I forbear to touch. They will all appear in due time.

The Journal of Commerce, from its very great ability & prudent character, exercises great influence over the Country. I do not intend, for the present, to appear either directly or indirectly as an author. I have merely deemed it advisable to recall your attention to facts, all of which are of record, so that you might, if you should deem it advisable, be able to answer the question,—Why did the late President not send troops to the



Forts at Charleston & the other Southern Forts? I send you a copy of my message in pamphlet form, from which I have never departed.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

GERARD HALLOCK, ESQUIRE.

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TO MR. KING.<sup>1</sup>

(*Private.*) WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, July 13, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

My late severe illness has hitherto prevented me from acknowledging the receipt of your kind letter of May last. Rest assured that this delay did not proceed from any want of regard for you or your family. On the contrary, I shall ever cherish the most friendly feelings and ardent wishes for the prosperity of both. I should be glad to hear from you as often as may be convenient, and, although I recover my strength but slowly, I think I may promise to be a more punctual correspondent.

The future of our country presents a dark cloud, through which my vision cannot penetrate. The assault upon Fort Sumter was the commencement of war by the Confederate States, and no alternative was left but to prosecute it with vigor on our part. Up and until all social and political relations ceased between the secession leaders and myself, I had often warned them that the North would rise to a man against them if such an assault were made. No alternative seems now to be left but to prosecute hostilities until the seceding States shall return to their allegiance, or until it shall be demonstrated that this object, which is nearest my heart, cannot be accomplished. From present appearances it seems certain that they would accept no terms of compromise short of an absolute recognition of their independence, which is impossible. I am glad that General Scott does not underrate the

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 557.

strength of his enemy, which would be a great fault in a commander. With all my heart and soul I wish him success. I think that some very unfit military appointments have been made, from which we may suffer in some degree in the beginning, but ere long merit will rise to its appropriate station. It was just so at the commencement of the war of 1812. I was rejoiced at the appointment of General Dix, and believe he will do both himself and the country honor.

In passing North or South, I should be most happy if you would call and pay us a visit at Wheatland. You shall receive a most hearty welcome, especially if you should be accompanied by your lady and Miss King.

With my kindest regards to them, I remain, very respectfully,  
Your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

P. S. Miss Lane desires to be kindly remembered to Mr., Mrs., and Miss King.

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### FROM MR. STANTON.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, July 16, 1861.

DEAR SIR:

Your favor with the continuation of the historical sketch was duly received. Last evening Judge Black and General Dix met at my house and consulted together in regard to it. We concur in opinion that a publication at present would accomplish no good. The public mind is too much excited on other topics to give attention to the past and it would only afford occasion for fresh malignant attacks upon you from Bennett. His day, I think, is rapidly passing; and at all events a stronger impression will hereafter be produced when the public feeling is more tranquil. The narrative appears to me to be a clear and accurate statement of the events of the period to which it relates, with one exception, of no material consequence, in respect to which the recollection of Judge Black, General Dix, & myself is somewhat different from the statement. Speaking of the order to the Brooklyn not to disembark the forces sent to Pickens unless that fort were attacked, you mention it as having been made with the entire unanimity of your Cabinet and the approval

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 558.

of General Scott. That he approved it is fully shown by Mr. Holt's note to you; but our recollection is, that in the Cabinet it was opposed by Judge Black, General Dix, & myself. I do not know that there is now any reason to question the wisdom of the measure; it may have saved Pickens from immediate attack at that time; and I have understood that General Scott says that Pickens could not have been successfully defended if it had then been attacked, and that he speaks of this as a blunder of the Confederates. In this view the wisdom of the measure is fully vindicated; and at the time it was supported by the Secretary of War and Secretary of the Navy, to whose Departments the subject appertained.

So far, however, as your administration is concerned, its policy in reference to both Sumter & Pickens is fully vindicated by the course of the present administration for forty days after the inauguration of Lincoln. No use was made of the means that had been prepared for reinforcing Sumter. A Republican Senator informed me a short time ago that General Scott personally urged him to consent to the evacuation of both Sumter & Pickens; and it is a fact of general notoriety, published in all the papers at the time & never contradicted, that not only the General but other military men who were consulted were in favor of that measure.

Whatever may be said by Bennett's malignity now, I think that the public will be disposed to do full justice to your efforts to avert the calamity of civil war; and every month for a long time to come will, I am afraid, furnish fresh evidence of the magnitude of that calamity. The impression that Mr. Weaver had received an army appointment proved to be a mistake; it was another Weaver who was appointed. General Dix is still here. He has been shamefully treated by the administration. We are expecting a general battle to be commenced at Fairfax to-day, and conflicting opinions of the result are entertained. With sincere regard, I remain as ever,

Yours truly,

EDWIN M. STANTON.

HIS EXC. JAMES BUCHANAN.

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## TO MR. TOUCEY.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 20 July 1861.

MY DEAR SIR/

Your favor of the 5th ultimo was duly received & should long since have been answered, but truly I had nothing to communicate except to reiterate my warm attachment & respect for yourself, & I knew this was not necessary.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 514.

I perceive by the papers that Mr. Grimes of Iowa has had a Resolution adopted by the Senate, asking the President for information of the nature of the Quasi Armistice at Fort Pickens, referred to in his message, &c. &c.

As I was able, I have written in scraps a historical review of the last four months of my administration, not however intending that it should be published in my name. I consider it a complete vindication of our policy. This is placed in the hands of Judge Black & Mr. Stanton to enable them to use the facts which it contains in case of an attack against me in Congress. They write that it is not probable any such attack will be made; but I received their letter the day before the motion of Mr. Grimes. General Dix, the Judge, & Mr. Stanton unite in the opinion that nothing in our defence should be published at present, because they do not believe the public mind is prepared to receive it, & this would have the effect of producing violent attacks against me from the Republican Press, whilst we have very few, if any, Journals which would be willing to answer them. *Sed quere de hoc.* I send you a copy of that portion of my review relating to Fort Pickens. It is not so precise as the rest, because I have not the necessary official papers in my possession. I perceive from your letter you have a distinct recollection of the whole affair. Would it not be wise & prudent for you to write to some friend in Washington on the subject,—Mr. Thomson of New Jersey, or some other person? Mr. Holt is not now there, & if he were, he appears to think that I ought immediately to have sent reinforcements to Fort Moultrie & the other two forts in the harbor. He surely must have forgotten that according to General Scott's own statement in his "Views," all the force which I could have commanded was "*only*" four companies, even if there had been no other objection to this measure.

I ought not to forget to mention that both Judge Black & Mr. Stanton write to me that they with General Dix had opposed our course in regard to Fort Pickens. I must, therefore, stand corrected in this particular, though I have no recollection of any such opposition. It doubtless, however, existed.

I think you ought to pay immediate attention to this matter. It affords a fair opportunity to relieve yourself from the false & unfounded charge made against you, that you had not vessels at

hand to meet the emergency. The first paragraph of your letter to me presents facts which would put the charge to flight.

My health is in a great degree restored, but I recover strength slowly. My letter is so long that I shall not advert to the disastrous condition of our public affairs. Miss Lane unites with myself in cordial wishes for your health & prosperity, & with kindest regards to Mrs. Toucey.

Ever your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: ISAAC TOUCEY.

## FROM MR. STANTON.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, July 26, 1861.

DEAR SIR:

Three days ago I received the enclosed letters, under cover addressed to me. Upon reading the first sentence I perceived there must be some mistake, & turning over the leaf saw that the address was to Judge Black, and I therefore return them unread. I should have handed them to him, but have not seen him since they were received, and am informed that he left here some days ago.

The dreadful disaster of Sunday can scarcely be mentioned. The imbecility of this administration culminated in that catastrophe—an irretrievable misfortune & national disgrace never to be forgotten are to be added to the ruin of all peaceful pursuits and national bankruptcy, as the result of Lincoln's "running the machine" for five months.

You perceive that Bennett is for a change of the Cabinet, and proposes for one of the new Cabinet Mr. Holt, whose opposition to Bennett's appointment was so bitter and intensely hostile. It is not unlikely that some change in the War and Navy Departments may take place, but none beyond those two Departments until Jeff Davis turns out the whole concern. The capture of Washington seems now to be inevitable—during the whole of Monday and Tuesday it might have been taken without any resistance. The rout, overthrow, & utter demoralization of the whole army is complete. Even now I doubt whether any serious opposition to the entrance of the Confederate forces could be offered. While Lincoln, Scott, & the Cabinet are disputing who's to blame, the City is unguarded & the enemy at hand. General McClellan reached here last evening. But if he had the ability of Cæsar,

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 559.

Alexander, or Napoleon, what can he accomplish? Will not Scott's jealousy, Cabinet intrigues, and Republican interference thwart him at every step? While hoping for the best, I cannot shut my eyes against the dangers that beset the Government & especially this City.

It is certain that Davis was in the field on Sunday, and the secessionists here assert that he headed in person the last victorious charge.

General Dix is in Baltimore; after three weeks' neglect & insult he was sent there. The warm debate between Douglas' friend Richardson & Kentucky Burnett has attracted some interest, but has been attended with no bellicose result. Since this note was commenced the morning paper has come in, & I see that McClellan did *not* arrive last night as I was informed he had. General Lee was after him, but will have to wait a while before they can meet.

Yours truly,

EDWIN M. STANTON.

HIS EXY. JAMES BUCHANAN.

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### FROM MR. TOUCEY.<sup>1</sup>

HARTFORD, July 31, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I have received your favor of the 20th. Senator Thomson took offence last winter because I refused to give his brother a command out of course in preference to his seniors, and although I think, from his more recent intercourse, that it has passed away, yet I am unwilling to make a request of him. The records of the Navy Department will show that on the 24th December, 1860, the sloop of war St. Louis, carrying twenty guns, was ordered from Vera Cruz to Pensacola; that on the 5th of January, 1861, the sloop of war Macedonia, carrying twenty-two guns, then at Portsmouth (N. H.), ready for sea, was ordered by telegraph to proceed to Pensacola; that on the 9th of January, 1861, the frigate Sabine, carrying fifty guns, was ordered from Vera Cruz to Pensacola; that the steam sloop of war Brooklyn, carrying twenty-five guns, was ordered to Pensacola with two companies of regular troops and a supply of military stores for Fort Pickens, and arrived there early in February; that the U. S. steamer Wyandotte, carrying five guns, was there doing effective service; that the armed storeship Relief was there doing good service, and was ordered to remain there; that the U. S. steamer Crusader, carrying eight guns, having gone from her cruising ground, on the coast of Cuba, to Pensacola for repairs, was ordered to proceed to Tortugas, and on the arrival of the troops sent there, to return immediately to Pensacola; and it being reported by the newspapers that she had arrived

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 515.



at New Orleans, she was, on the 10th of January, by telegraph to New Orleans, ordered to return immediately to Pensacola, where she would find her orders. The Relief left Pensacola with prisoners and the families of officers for New York in violation of her orders, for which her commander was tried and condemned by court-martial. The Crusader missed her orders. When the Brooklyn, the Sabine, the Macedonian, the St. Louis, and the Wyandotte were lying before Pensacola, the force being larger than was necessary, the St. Louis, her term of service having expired, was ordered to New York. Whether her orders had reached her before the 4th of March, I am not able to say. At this time the home squadron consisted of the Powhatan, Sabine, Brooklyn, St. Louis, Pocahontas, Pawnee, Mohawk, Waterwitch, Wyandotte, Crusader, Cumberland, Macedonian, and Relief. The sloop of war Plymouth, the practice ship, was at Norfolk in good condition. The U. S. steamer Anacosta was in commission at Washington. The frigate Constitution, having been thoroughly repaired, was anchored at Annapolis, in aid of the Naval Academy. The great steamships Colorado, Minnesota, and Mississippi, at Boston, and the Wabash at New York, had been thoroughly repaired, and could put to sea in two weeks; the Merrimac, at Norfolk, in three weeks; and the Roanoke, in dock at New York, in six weeks. Of the above vessels, fourteen are steamers, eight ships of the line; the Alabama, Virginia, Vermont, Ohio, North Carolina, New York, Columbus, and Pennsylvania, lying at the navy yards, had been, on the 1st of December last, recommended by the Department, in pursuance of the report of a board of naval officers, to be converted into steam frigates, but Congress did not make the necessary appropriation. The frigates Brandywine, Potomac, St. Lawrence, Columbia, and Raritan were at the navy yards, and the same board of officers had recommended that when repaired they should be razeed and converted into sloops. The sloops of war Perry, Dale, Preble, Vincennes, Jamestown, and Germantown had, within a few months, returned from their regular cruises on the coasts of Africa and South America and the East and West Indies, and were at the navy yards awaiting repairs. Congress had twice cut down the estimates of the Department for repairs a million dollars. Of the thirty-seven steam vessels in the navy, twenty had been added to it while I was at the head of the Department. While we had this force at home, the Mediterranean squadron consisted of but three vessels, the Susquehanna, Richmond, and Iroquois; the Brazil squadron, of the Congress, Seminole, and Pulaski; the East India squadron, of the Hartford, Saginaw, Dacotah, and John Adams; the Pacific squadron, of the Lancaster, Cyane, St. Mary's, Wyoming, and Narragansett; the African squadron, of the San Jacinto, Constellation, Portsmouth, Mohican, Saratoga, Sumter, and Mystic. The Niagara was on her way to carry home the Japanese ambassadors; the Vandalia to relieve the John Adams. I make this detailed statement that you may see that there is not the slightest ground for anxiety as to the course of your administration in reference to the naval force at Fort Pickens, in the home squadron, or in the foreign squadrons. I concur with Judge Black and others, that a publication at this time is not expedient, because it would provoke attack; because it would not be heard; because the best time for it is at the moment

when the tide of public sentiment begins to ebb and to set in the opposite direction, which will inevitably soon take place. The public cannot fail to see that affairs have taken a downward direction with fatal velocity since the 4th of March, and that a series of measures could not have been devised more exactly adapted to divide the country and break the Government to pieces, than that which has been pursued by your successor.

Mrs. Toucey unites with me in presenting to yourself and to Miss Lane our most respectful regards.

Ever faithfully your friend,

J. TOUCEY.

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TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 31 Aug: 1861.

MY DEAR SIR/ ,

I am sorry that any cause has prevented you from paying me a visit. I trust your kind purpose will not be long suspended. The memory of your last visit causes Miss Lane & myself to be anxious that it should be repeated.

I rejoice to learn that you & yours are all in good health. May this precious blessing be long continued to you & them!

I agree with you that nothing but a vigorous prosecution of the war can now determine the question between the North & the South. It is vain to talk of peace at the present moment. The Confederate States, flushed with their success at Bull's Run, would consent to nothing less than a recognition of their independence, & this it is impossible to grant under any conceivable circumstances. I have much faith that General McClellan is "the coming man."

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: GEORGE G. LEIPER.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 559.

TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 4 Sep: 1861.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have this morning received your favor of yesterday. I rejoice to learn that when you visit me you will be accompanied by two of your granddaughters; & the sooner the better. We shall give you & them a most cordial welcome.

In regard to any public use of the opinions expressed in my letter, in favor of the prosecution of the war, I would rather for the present you would withhold them. Of course I have kept no copy & know not how they are expressed. Every person who has conversed with me knows that I am in favor of sustaining the Government in a vigorous prosecution of the war for the restoration of the Union. An occasion may offer when it may be proper for me authoritatively to express this opinion for the public. Until that time shall arrive, I desire to avoid any *public* exhibition.

When a private letter of mine was published some time since condemning the desertion of the Flag by the officers of the army & the navy, you know it was made the occasion to abuse me by the Black Republican Papers. Knowing our relations of intimate friendship, it would be said that we had concocted a plan to bring me before the public in self-defence in an indirect manner.

Ever your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: GEORGE G. LEIPER.

P. S. Miss Lane desires to be affectionately remembered to you, & anticipates your visit, with that of yr. granddaughters, with great satisfaction.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 561.

FROM MR. COBDEN.<sup>1</sup>

MIDHURST, SUSSEX, 5 Sept. 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:

It is rather more than two years since I had the pleasure of seeing you, & in that interval what events have occurred!

I think it is no exaggeration to say that there are few Americans who have been more deeply & painfully interested than myself in the deplorable civil conflict which is now raging on your Continent. The subject is so distressing to my feelings that I avoid as much as possible all correspondence with my American friends. But after the friendly reception which I experienced from you at Washington, I should be sorry if our intimacy were to be impaired owing to any neglect on my part.

I have been abroad nearly the whole time since my return from the States, chiefly in France & Algiers, but am now settled down at home. My health is improved, & if I can be quiet & avoid public meetings, I hope to continue to escape from a return of my bronchial affection. I hope you are well, & that you will be good enough to let me hear from you. Or if you cannot find time to write, pray let me have a letter from my amiable young friend, your niece, to whom I beg to be most kindly remembered.

I will not enter on the subject of your domestic troubles. My experience in our Crimean war led me to the conclusion that from the moment when the first drop of blood is shed, reason & argument are powerless to put an end to war. It can only be terminated by its own self-destroying & exhaustive process. *This, however, I will say, that of all the questions ever subjected to the ordeal of battle, that which is the ground of quarrel between the Northern & Southern States of your Union seems the least adapted for the arbitrament of the sword.*

I feel very anxious that nothing should arise to put in jeopardy the relations between England & your Country. I remember listening with great satisfaction to General Cass, whilst I was at Washington, when he narrated to me the satisfactory settlement of the various questions in debate between the two Countries;—and I will venture to offer the opinion that history will do justice to the successful foreign policy of your administration. (It would be very presumptuous in me, a foreigner, to pass judgment on your internal policy.) Should it happen that you are in communication with General Cass, will you kindly remember me to him?

The subject of the blockade is becoming more & more serious. I am afraid we have ourselves to blame for not having placed the question of belligerent rights on a better footing. I remember that after the Congress of Paris had agreed to abolish privateering, Mr. Marcy proposed to go a step further & exempt private property altogether from capture. This was objected to, I believe, by our government. Afterwards, I remember, your newspapers advocated the abolition of blockades altogether. I have the impression that

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 560.

your government, I mean your Presidency, would have agreed to the Paris declaration, with the addition of a clause for making private property (not contraband of war) sacred at sea, & another clause doing away with blockades altogether, excepting as regards articles contraband of war. *Am I correct in this supposition?*<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Bright is well, but, like myself, feels your civil war almost with the sorrow of a private affliction. Mr. Milner Gibson is on a yachting excursion. He has grown a little stouter, & somewhat grey with the cares of office. Believe me,

Yours very sincerely,

R. COBDEN.

HON. JAMES BUCHANAN.

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## TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND, 12 Sep: 1861.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your kind favor of the 7th Instant & owe you many thanks for it as well as for Mr. Stanton's report. It puts to rest the assertion that a single columbiad or cannon ever reached the Southern States in 1860 or 1861, & they are not fighting us with our own weapons. Floyd's order was arrested before its execution. About the small arms, there does not appear to be any thing out of the usual course of administration

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Cobden's impression was correct as to the exemption of private property at sea, but not as to blockades; at any rate, the abolition of blockades was not proposed, and no opinion was expressed on the subject.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 562. See further, as to General Twiggs, Curtis's Buchanan, II. 563. John B. Blake, a native of Virginia, for a time practised his profession, that of a physician, in Washington, D. C. He was commissioner of public buildings during a part of the administration of Pierce and the whole of that of Buchanan, and was for many years president of the National Metropolitan Bank. He discharged at different times various public functions. "He was," says Mr. J. Buchanan Henry, "a stanch and faithful friend of Mr. Buchanan, though not important politically. Among other things, he filled the position now occupied by the military and naval aides of the President, as a kind of master of ceremonies at all public receptions at the White House, presenting to the President those who attended. I know that my uncle entertained the highest esteem and regard for Dr. Blake. Though graduated as a physician, he was not then practising."

& distribution. They were ordered there so long ago as December, 1859.

I have never received the bound copies of the public Documents of the 35th Congress; though I recollect that Mr. Glossbrenner or some other person told me before I left Washington that Mr. Wheeler was boxing them up for me. I expect to see Mr. G. in a few days, & shall inquire of him.

I owe you very many thanks for the order you have obtained from Mr. Smith for the documents of the 36th Congress; & please to present my kind regards to Mr. Kelly.

We must, I presume, soon hear of a battle or of a retreat of the Confederate forces. Our all is embarked on board a ship which is approaching the breakers. This is no time to investigate why she was brought into this sad condition. We must save her by an united effort. We must prosecute the war with the utmost vigor. May God grant us a safe deliverance & a restoration of the Union!

Miss Lane desires to be most kindly remembered to you.

Yr. friend always

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JNO. B. BLAKE.

P. S. Pardon me for having omitted to acknowledge yr. favor of the 8th Aug: in answer to mine of the 5th. General Twiggs has sent me another insolent & threatening letter, in which he exults in the fact that my likeness had been ordered from the Rotunda. I know not what will become of it. It is condemned as a likeness by good judges.

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### TO MR. KING.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, September 18, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I am gratified to learn, by your favor of the 13th, that your visit here was agreeable to yourself and Miss King, and we therefore trust that it may be soon repeated. I need not say that both

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 563.



Miss Lane and myself will be most happy to see you both again, and give you a cordial welcome.

You recollect the correspondence between Mr. Holt and Mr. Thompson. The last letter of Mr. Thompson to Mr. Holt was published in the tri-weekly *National Intelligencer* of March 19th, 1861, and was dated at Oxford on March 11th. Mr. Holt, I believe, replied to this letter; but, if so, I cannot find his reply in the *Intelligencer*. I should be much obliged to you if you could procure me a copy of this reply. Poor Thompson! He committed a sad wrong against his country, from which he can never recover.<sup>1</sup> He had been the devoted friend and admirer of Mr. Holt, but in the end he afforded just cause to that gentleman for his severe answer.

How Mr. Holt came to be so far mistaken, in his letter of May 31st to Kentucky, as to state that the revolutionary leaders greeted me with all hails to my face, I do not know. The truth is that after the message of the 3d of December they were alienated from me; and after I had returned the insolent letter of the first South Carolina commissioners to them, I was attacked by Jefferson Davis and his followers on the floor of the Senate, and all political and social intercourse between us ceased. Had the Senate confirmed my nomination of the 2d January of a collector of the port of Charleston, the war would probably have commenced in January, instead of May. I am collecting materials for history, and I cannot find a note from Mr. Slidell to myself and my answer relative to the very proper removal of Beauregard from West Point.

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<sup>1</sup>This relates to Thompson's action in notifying the South Carolina authorities of the sailing of the *Star of the West*. Among the Buchanan Papers of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, there is a letter of the Hon. Horatio King to Mr. J. Buchanan Henry, of Nov. 8, 1883, in which the former quotes a letter addressed to himself by Mr. Holt, reading as follows: "I have to say that Thompson never denied sending the telegram in relation to the sailing of the *Star of the West* under the circumstances mentioned by me; on the contrary, he has constantly avowed and defended the act and gloried in it. Beginning at the foot of page 16 of the pamphlet which you sent to Mr. Henry, will be found the explicit words which he addressed to the people of Mississippi on the subject, and in his two late 'interviews' he has confessed the charge as made and has justified or sought to justify himself. . . . Certainly I do not expect or desire anybody to believe this charge because *made by me*, but the repeated avowals of Thompson himself would seem to entitle it to some credit."

I think I must have given them to Mr. Holt. He was much pleased with my answer at the time. If they are in his possession, I should be glad you would procure me copies. They are very brief. The ladies of Mr. S.'s family never after looked near the White House.

I think I can perceive in the public mind a more fixed, resolute, and determined purpose than ever to prosecute the war to a successful termination with all the men and means in our power. Enlistments are now proceeding much more rapidly than a few weeks ago, and I am truly glad of it. The time has passed for offering compromises and terms of peace to the seceded States. We well know that, under existing circumstances, they would accept of nothing less than a recognition of their independence, which it is impossible we should grant. There is a time for all things under the sun; but surely this is not the moment for paralyzing the arm of the national administration by a suicidal conflict among ourselves, but for bold, energetic, and united action. The Democratic party has ever been devoted to the Constitution and the Union; and I rejoice that, among the many thousands that have rushed to their defence in this the hour of peril, a large majority belong to that time-honored party.

I sat down to write you a few lines, but find that my letter has swelled into large proportions.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. HORATIO KING.

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TO A COMMITTEE OF THE CITIZENS OF CHESTER  
AND LANCASTER COUNTIES.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

28 September 1861.

DEAR SIR/

I have been honored by your kind invitation, as chairman of the appropriate Committee, to attend & address a Union Meeting of the Citizens of Chester & Lancaster Counties, to be

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 565.

held at Hayesville on the first of October. This I should gladly accept, proceeding as it does from a much valued portion of my old Congressional District, but advancing years & the present state of my health render it impossible.

You correctly estimate the deep interest which I feel "in common with the Citizens who will there be assembled, in the present condition of our Country." This is, indeed, serious; but our recent military reverses, so far from producing despondency in the minds of a loyal & powerful people, will only animate them to more mighty exertions in sustaining a war which had become inevitable by the assault of the Confederate States upon Fort Sumter. For this reason, were it possible for me to address your meeting, waiving all other topics I should confine myself to a solemn & earnest appeal to my countrymen, & especially those without families, to volunteer for the war & join the many thousands of brave & patriotic volunteers who are already in the field. This is the moment for action,—for prompt, energetic, & united action, & not for the discussion of Peace Propositions. These, we must know, would be rejected by the States that have seceded, unless we should offer to recognize their independence, which is entirely out of the question. Better counsels may hereafter prevail, when these people shall be convinced that the war is conducted, not for their conquest or subjugation, but solely for the purpose of bringing them back to their original position in the Union, without impairing in the slightest degree any of their Constitutional rights. Whilst, therefore, we shall cordially hail their return under our common & glorious flag & welcome them as brothers, yet until that happy day shall arrive it will be our duty to support the President with all the men & means at the command of the Country in a vigorous and successful prosecution of the war.

Yours very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

SAMUEL A. WORTH, ESQUIRE,  
Chairman, &c. &c.

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FROM JUDGE BLACK.<sup>1</sup>

YORK, Saturday evening, [Oct. 5, 1861].

MY DEAR SIR:

Your letter to Chester Co. which I have just seen surprises me a little.<sup>2</sup> Those are no doubt your true sentiments, and you had a right to express them. But your endorsement of Lincoln's policy will be a very serious drawback upon the defence of your own. It is in vain to think that the two administrations can be made consistent. The fire upon the Star of the West was as bad as the fire on Fort Sumter; and the taking of Moultrie & Pinckney was worse than either. You know what I thought of these events at the time they occurred. If this war is right and politic and wise and constitutional, I cannot but think you ought to have made it. I am willing to vindicate the last administration to the best of my ability, and I will do it; but I can't do it on the ground which you now occupy, and therefore I cannot conscientiously ask you to pay anything for the work.

My affection for you has moulted no feather. No difference of opinion shall diminish our friendship if I can help it. It is simply a consideration of duty to you as well as myself which obliges me to decline receiving anything from you. When you come over here on Thursday I will show you my manuscript; from which, slovenly as it is, you will see the radical difference of our views, and understand how wrong it would be to make you in any manner responsible either in pocket or in character for what I may write on that theme. I am as ever your devoted friend,

J. S. BLACK.

HON. JAS. BUCHANAN.

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TO MR. HENRY.<sup>3</sup>

WHEATLAND 21 October '61.

MY DEAR JAMES/

I have mislaid your last letter, & have not answered it sooner, awaiting information that my account had been settled & the balance struck in the Chemical Bank. I think there would be no risk, & if so, no danger, in sending a Bank Book or the Certificate of Loan by Mail. I believe that New York Loan

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>2</sup> Letter to a committee of citizens of Chester and Lancaster counties, Sept. 28, 1861, *supra*.

<sup>3</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 566.

is registered & without Coupons;—but there is no hurry in either case.

I am determined to sell all my seceded State Bonds this Fall for what they will bring. North Carolinas will probably command \$60, & I would sell at that price to-morrow, but dislike to send the Certificates by Mail. These Loans may rise or sink in the market as the Bulls or the Bears may prevail; but after the war is over, let it terminate as it may, these States will be so exhausted as not to be able to pay, be they never so willing. As you sometimes deal in Stocks, I give you this *confidentially* as my opinion.

We have never heard a word from or of our good friend Schell since he left us. How is he? or what has become of him?

I think it is now time that I should not merely defend but triumphantly vindicate myself, or cause myself to be vindicated before the Public; though my friends still urge me to wait.

I believe it is universally believed that Floyd stole guns & sent them to the South. There is not a word of truth in it, as is proved by a Report of the Committee on Military Affairs to the House of Representatives on the 18 February last, Mr. Stanton, a Black Republican, being Chairman. It is true that at a late period of the administration Floyd made the attempt to send a considerable number of Columbiads and thirty-two pounders to Ship Island & Galveston; but I arrested the order, through the Secretary of War, before a single gun was sent.

We are expecting Mrs. Roosevelt, & I shall be delighted to see her, though we shall not be able to entertain her as I could desire. I have never at any period since I commenced house-keeping been able to get a good cook, or even a tolerably good one, except at Washington; & we now have one of the worst. We shall, however, give her a hearty welcome.

Yours affectionately

JAMES BUCHANAN.

J. BUCHANAN HENRY, ESQ.

P. S. For what price can New York Loan be obtained in the Market? Have the Messrs. O'Brien my Virginia certificate in their possession? The Confederates have not confiscated State Loans in their infamous Act, & I presume there would be no difficulty in assigning it.

TO MISS LANE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 6 Nov: 1861.

MY DEAR HARRIET/

Judge Black came here yesterday about nightfall. Judge Leiper was here. He, Judge B., sat up last night after we went to bed, stating he wanted to write to you. This morning after breakfast he went away, very much to my surprise & regret, having procured a man to come for him from Lancaster on his arrival there from York.—I presume the Biography is all over. I shall now depend upon myself with God's assistance. He told me just before he left that he had had an interview with your brother James yesterday afternoon, but not what the purport of it was. The extremely rainy & stormy day yesterday prevented my company from coming.

We are all well & Judge Leiper as merry as a cricket, regretting yr. absence. In haste

Yours affectionately

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MISS HARRIET R. LANE.

P. S. I enclose a circular which Mr. Huber, the assessor of Lancaster Township, left with me for you. Please fill it up, sign & return it. Your \$7000 Penna. R. R. Bonds are not taxable & need not be returned. If you choose, you can sign the return, leaving it in blank for me to fill up from your papers in Bank.

TO MR. KING.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, November 12, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

You will confer a great favor upon me if you can obtain a half-dozen of copies of Mr. Stanton's report from the Committee on Military Affairs, made on the 18th February, 1861 (No.

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection.

<sup>2</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 567.



85), relative to the arms alleged to have been stolen and sent to the South by Floyd. This report, with the remarks of Mr. Stanton when presenting it, ought to have put this matter at rest, and it did so, I believe, so far as Congress was concerned. It has, however, been recently repeated by Cameron, Reverdy Johnson, and others, and I desire these copies to send to different parts of the Union, so that the falsehood may be refuted by the record. I am no further interested in the matter than, if the charge were true, it might argue a want of vigilance on my part.

I perceive that Mr. Holt has got a . . . from the Secretary of War, and I learn from those who read Forney's *Press* that Stanton is the counsel and friend of McClellan, who is, I trust and hope, "the coming man."

By the bye, it is difficult to imagine how it was possible to mystify so plain a subject, under the laws of war, as an exchange of prisoners with the rebels, so as to make it mean a recognition in any form, however remote, of their Confederacy. It admits nothing but that your enemy, whether pirate, rebel, Algerine, or regular government, has got your soldiers in his possession, and you have his soldiers in your possession. The exchange means nothing beyond. The laws of humanity are not confined to any other limit. The more barbarous and cruel the enemy, the greater is the necessity for an exchange; because the greater is the danger that they will shed the blood of your soldiers. I do not apply this remark to the Confederate States, and only use it by way of illustration. I believe they have not treated their prisoners cruelly.

They do not seem to understand at Washington another plain principle of the law of nations, and that is, that whilst the capture and confiscation of private property at sea is still permissible, this is not the case on land. Such are all the authorities. The Treaty of Ghent recognized slaves as private property, and therefore they were to be restored; and we paid for all our army consumed in Mexico. The rebels have violated this law in the most reckless manner.

But why am I writing so? I have materials put together which will constitute, unless I am greatly mistaken, not merely a good defence, but a triumphant vindication of my administration. You must not be astonished some day to find in print portraits drawn by myself of all those who ever served in my cabinet. I think I know them all perfectly, unless it may be Stanton.

I hope Miss King has entirely recovered. Please present me to her very kindly, as well as to Mrs. King. I am now alone, Miss Lane being in New York; but thank God! I am tranquil and contented, sound, or nearly so, in body, and I trust sound in mind, and ever true to my friends.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. HORATIO KING.

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TO MISS LANE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, 13 November, 1861.

MY DEAR HARRIET/

I have received your letter of the 11th Instant with Judge Black's opinion & am glad that you have at length decided.

I enclose a letter directed to you. The Misses Johnston will not leave until next week. By them I shall send the package for Mrs. Stevens & another package, I presume from the convent at Georgetown, which Father Keenan gave me a few days ago. Father Balf his associate brought it from Reading where it had been carried by a Mrs. McManus. It must have been on the way for some time.

I shall go to the Bank & make out your list of taxable property including your horse & your gold watch. I know not how I omitted to enclose you the circular. Horses and watches are included in it.

Please to remember me very kindly to Mr. Royal Phelps & tell Mr. Schell I heartily sympathize with him in the loss of his election. It is a consolation to know that the people of his District will be the greatest sufferers by his defeat.

My health & strength, I thank God, appear to be daily improving; & we get along in great tranquillity & peace. Miss

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection. Inaccurately printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 597, under date of 1863.

Hetty is very kind & attentive & has been all I could desire since you left. Mrs. Fahnestock is still here.

With my affectionate regards to Mrs. Roosevelt and my best respects to the Judge,

I remain yours affectionately,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MISS LANE.

P. S.—Judge Black, as Dr. Nevin informs me, went to Washington on Monday last. I shall be prepared, I think, before the meeting of Congress without his aid.

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TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 21 Nov: 1861.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 11th Instant, & am much obliged to you for the suggestions which it contains. There needs no collection of unpublished documents to vindicate my administration. The misfortune is that in the general excitement no person regards the documents that have been published. I am invulnerable at every point.

The charge that Floyd stole arms & sent them to the South is as current as though it had not been put down by a Report of the Military Committee of the House in February last. I send you a copy. From this you will observe that the Southern States got less than their proportion of arms for the year 1860, & that three of them, Louisiana, Mississippi, & Kentucky, did not receive their quota simply because they did not ask for them. (Table No. 2.)

It is probable that Floyd may have intended to furnish the South with a number of our columbiads & 32 pounders under pretence of arming the forts at Ship Island & Galveston; but you will perceive that he was frustrated in this attempt as soon

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

as the fact was made known to me from Pittsburg. Our cannon were all retained at Pittsburg, & those proposed to be sent from that place have done good service against the rebels.

I presume that the old condemned muskets, one fifth of which were ordered to be sent by Floyd to the Southern arsenals in the year 1859, cannot be made the subject of a charge. This order was given long before the nomination of Mr. Lincoln. The testimony of Col: Craig & Captain Maynadier shows how fair & regular was the transaction.

I have had a thought of preparing an editorial article on this subject & sending it to Mr. Green for publication; but did not know whether this would be agreeable to him.

The Secretary of War, who ought to have known better, & your wandering orator's remarks introductory to Mr. Holt's speech shall be a subject of denunciation to him *personally* at our first meeting.

Nobody, I believe, has ever charged me with having been accessory to the alleged plundering of arms by Floyd; but they have denounced me for want of vigilance in not discovering & preventing it, instead of commending me for having done this very thing.

I hope you will send me a copy of your letter to Peter Cooper as soon as it shall be published.

I was happy to hear from Mr. Appleton, though indirectly.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

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### FROM GENERAL DIX.<sup>1</sup>

BALTIMORE, December 2, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I enclose you a proclamation, rather out of date, but not the less valuable, I trust, for having been sent out on the very day John Cochrane proclaimed the infamous and cowardly scheme of arming slaves against their masters.

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 568.

I believe every State north of South Carolina and Mississippi may be reclaimed by a just and enlightened policy. The abolitionists will make a powerful effort to drag the country into the emancipation of slaves. But I am confident they will fail. Fortunately this project cannot be separated from the support of Fremont, and it will for that reason, I think, be condemned by the friends of the administration.

The *Herald* said my proclamation was inspired by the President. I do not yet know whether he approves it. It was put forth without consulting any one. I knew I was right; and when this conviction is strong, I never consult friends, for fear they may differ with me.

It has been a source of great gratification to me to hear, as I have frequently from Mr. Magraw, of your improved health. That you may live to see this unhappy contest ended, and good fellowship restored again, is the sincere wish of, dear sir, yours very respectfully and truly,

JOHN A. DIX.

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TO MISS LANE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, 2 Dec: 1861.

MY DEAR HARRIET/

I have received your letters of the 20th & 30th ultimo, & in compliance with the request in the latter return you Judge Black's opinion. I have heard nothing from him since his call on the way to York after parting from you at the Continental.

I hope you are enjoying yourself. Indeed this cannot fail to be the case with such a charming lady as Mrs. Roosevelt. We get along very comfortably & pleasantly at Wheatland. I received a letter yesterday from Annie Buchanan, offering to pay me a visit; but I advised her to defer it until after your return. Indeed this would be no place for her at present. I wish you, however, to remain at New York just as long as you find it agreeable.

I am glad to learn that Judge Nelson believes that Captain Wilkes can be sustained by public law in the seizure of Mason & Slidell. I place great reliance upon his judgment; but at the

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 569.

first we shall probably receive a terrific broadside from the English Journals.<sup>1</sup>

The more I saw of the Misses Johnston, I liked them the better. They are fine women.

I often see the Nevins & am glad of it. I dine to-day at Harry Magraw's. The dinner is given to Bishop Wood.

With my kindest regards to the Judge & Mrs. Roosevelt, I remain

Yours affectionately,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MISS LANE.

P. S. Should you see Mrs. Gwin, remember me to her with great kindness.

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## TO MR. KING.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND, December 10, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I have received a package directed in your well-known hand; and upon opening it discover a letter directed to Miss Lane, which I shall forward to her, with a beautiful pair of slippers and fan; the former, I presume, for myself.

Miss Lane has been in New York since early in November, and I know not when she will return.

Presuming that the slippers are a New Year's gift from Miss King to myself, I desire to express my grateful thanks to her for this token of her regard. Present to her my kindest wishes for her health, prosperity, and happiness.

I wish I had something to write to you about which might interest you; but my life glides on so smoothly that I should

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<sup>1</sup> In a previous letter to Miss Lane of Nov. 21, relating almost wholly to purely personal matters, Mr. Buchanan said: "The exploit of Captain Wilkes is destined to give us much trouble. John Bull will roar at what he will esteem the violation of his flag."

<sup>2</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 569.



scarcely know how time passes, were it not for the terrible condition of the country. I never expected to see the day when the Federal Government would assume the power of issuing a paper currency, much less of making it a legal tender.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. and Miss King, I remain  
Always your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. HORATIO KING.

P. S. Your letter of the 18th November is the last I have heard from any member of my late cabinet. I have kind friends at Washington, however, who occasionally give me the news. I was glad to see that Judge Black had been appointed reporter to the Supreme Court. The position is respectable, though a descent. . . .

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### TO MR. COBDEN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, PENN.,

December 14, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I ought long since to have answered your letter of September; but a protracted illness, from which, thank God! I have some time since recovered, has left me far behind with my correspondence. It is my sincere desire always to cherish the intimacy which commenced between us in better and happier days. I deeply regret that the feelings of friendship between the people of the two countries are not what they were when we parted at Washington more than two years ago. The public journals on both sides of the water have contributed much to produce this result. Still the masses on our side are far from being hostile to the English people, whilst they entertain a very high regard for Queen Victoria.

I trust that the seizure of Messrs. Mason and Slidell on

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 570.

board the Trent may be viewed in what I consider its proper light by the British ministry. A neutral nation is the common friend of both belligerents, and has no right to aid the one to the injury of the other. It is, consequently, very clear under the law of nations, that a neutral vessel has no right to carry articles contraband of war to any enemy, to transport his troops or his despatches. These principles are well settled by British authority. And Sir W. Scott, in the case of the *Atalanta* (Wheaton, 566) informs us that the writers on public law declare "that the belligerent may stop the ambassador of his enemy on his way." And why not? If it be unlawful to carry despatches, with the greater reason it must be unlawful to carry ministers who write despatches, and to whom despatches are addressed, who are the agents of one belligerent government on their way to a neutral country for the express purpose of enlisting its government in the war against the other.

In some respects it would have been better had Captain Wilkes seized the Trent and brought her into port. It would then have become a purely judicial question, to be decided upon precedent and authority by the appropriate court of admiralty, and the two governments would not then have been brought face to face as they are now confronting each other. Under all the circumstances, I do not think that this seizure presents a justifiable cause of quarrel on the part of the British government, and I trust you may take this view of the subject.

In reference to your question in regard to blockade, no administration within the last half century, up to the end of my term, would have consented to a general declaration abolishing privateering. Our most effectual means of annoying a great naval power upon the ocean is by granting letters of marque and reprisal. We could not possibly, therefore, have consented to the Paris declaration which would have left the vessels (for example of Great Britain or France) free to capture our merchant vessels, whilst we should have deprived ourselves of the employment of the force which had proved so powerful in capturing their merchant vessels. Hence the proposition of Mr. Marcy to abolish war upon private property altogether on the ocean, as modern civilization had abolished it on the land. I do not think that a proposition was ever made to abolish blockade. I certainly have no recollection of it.

I am rejoiced to learn that Mr. Bright is well; I was afraid, when I left England, that his health was in an unpromising condition. Please to remember me in the kindest terms to him and Mr. Gibson. Miss Lane is in New York; if she were at home, she would have many kind messages to send you.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

THE HON. RICHARD COBDEN.

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TO MISS LANE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

19 December, 1861.

MY DEAR HARRIET/

I have received your favor of the 18th Instant & am truly sorry to learn the death of my friend McLanahan. At one period I was very much attached to him & I still continued to entertain for him cordial feelings of kindness. . . .<sup>2</sup>

You doubtless have seen the New York Herald of Yesterday & observed that I am charged by its correspondent at Washington with having taken away from the White House the pictures of Queen Victoria, Prince Albert, & other members of the Royal family, presented to me for the Presidential Mansion by the Prince of Wales. Lord Lyons, by whom I believe they were sent to you, ought to correct this. I remember they came to you in loose sheets without frames & whether they were framed at your expense or mine I know not.

As to the Japanese presents:—After the departure of the Ambassadors, I sent them all, at least I so believe, to the Patent Office. I believe they gave you, Harriet Buchanan, & Miss Macalester some presents about which I know nothing. Miss Hetty says yours are all locked up.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection. Extract printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 571.

<sup>2</sup> A paragraph relating to a personal matter is here omitted.

It is a mean & contemptible charge, arguing in me a mean & contemptible spirit, & therefore the greater necessity for its contradiction. I presume you can have this done in New York through the Judge & Mrs. Roosevelt or some other friend.<sup>1</sup>

Miss Hetty has found a Bill on file against you, receipted by Francis Lamb & dated on 2 December, 1860, for four gilt frames amounting to \$18.00. Were these frames for the pictures? The other two are in Rosewood.

You ask my opinion on the Slidell & Mason affair, & whether there is danger of war with England. I think, as a fair deduction from British authorities, that Captain Wilkes might have seized the Trent & brought her into Port for adjudication. Had he done this, it would have become a judicial question, & the two nations would not have been brought front to front in opposition to each other. That he only seized the Commissioners & let the vessel go was an act intended for kindness on his part. Certainly a war cannot grow out of this question, unless Great Britain desires it, without very bad management on our side. My kindest regards to Judge & Mrs. Roosevelt.

Yours affectionately

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MISS HARRIET R. LANE.

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<sup>1</sup> Another example of the malicious or reckless detraction to which Mr. Buchanan was at this period subjected is afforded by the following paper drawn up by him for publication:

"There has recently been published in the New York *Tribune* a letter dated at Gotha on the 12th August, and purporting to have been written by Bayard Taylor, which contains the following: 'In this place is published the *Almanach de Gotha*, the most aristocratic calendar in the world, containing the only reliable pedigrees and portraits of the crowned heads. Well, last summer the publisher was surprised by the reception of a portrait of Miss Harriet Lane, forwarded by her uncle, with a request that it be engraved for next year's *Almanach*, as our Republican rulers had a right to appear in the company of the reigning families.'

"We are authorized to say that this statement in regard to Ex-President Buchanan is without the least shadow of foundation. He never forwarded such a portrait to the publisher of the *Gotha Almanach*; never made such a request and never had any correspondence of any kind, directly or indirectly, with that gentleman. He was, therefore, surprised when this absurd charge was a few days ago brought to his notice by a friend." (Curtis's Buchanan, II. 525.)

TO LORD LYONS.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

19 December, 1861.

MY LORD:

You have probably observed a charge made upon me by a correspondent of the New York Herald for having brought to Wheatland certain pictures of members of the royal family *which had been presented to me by the Prince of Wales for the Presidential mansion*. Your Lordship knows better than any other person on this side of the Atlantic the falsity of this charge. I would, therefore, thank you to address me a note, stating the facts connected with the gift of these pictures to Miss Lane, for publication, should I deem this necessary. Miss Lane is in New York, or she would doubtless address you on the subject. You can deliver your answer to my friend Dr. Blake, the late Commissioner of Public Buildings, who will call for it at any time you may appoint.

With earnest wishes for your health and prosperity, I remain very respectfully

Your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

LORD LYONS.

TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND, December 19, 1861.

MY DEAR SIR:—

In looking over the New York — of yesterday, I observe that his Washington correspondent states that I took away from the White House the pictures of Queen Victoria, Prince Albert, and other members of the royal family, presented to me for the

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>2</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 524.

Presidential mansion by the Prince of Wales. I trust that neither the President nor Mrs. Lincoln had any connection with this statement. Likenesses of the Queen and Prince, with four of the children of the royal family, were sent to Miss Lane in loose sheets, with many kind messages, by the Prince of Wales, immediately before he left for England. I think they were borne by Lord Lyons. Miss Lane had them plainly framed at her own expense, and hung them up in the Red Room until she should return to Wheatland. I am also charged with having taken away from the White House a large number of Chinese and Japanese curiosities intended upon presentation for the mansion. You are aware that after the Japanese ambassadors left, I sent everything that had been presented by them to me to the Patent Office. There were at the time two young ladies staying at the White House, and before the ambassadors left they presented Miss Lane and each of them some trifling Japanese curiosities. What they received I do not know, but since the receipt of the —— I have inquired of Miss Hetty, and I certainly would not give twenty dollars for the whole lot. Miss Lane is absent in New York, and I cannot find her keys. . . .

I send you the enclosed as something like what might be published. If you would call on Lord Lyons, to whom I enclose a letter, and say you called at my request, he would tell you all about the pictures of the Queen and Prince Albert, and their children. . . .

Thank God! my health I may say is entirely restored. How glad I should be to see you! Miss Lane has been absent in New York for some time, and I do not expect her home until after New Year.

From your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

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FROM DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON CITY, Decr. 19th, 1861.

HIS EXCELLENCY JAMES BUCHANAN,

MY DEAR SIR: A friend has called my attention to a description of the President's Levee on the first page of the New York Herald of yesterday's date, from which I make the following extract: "Next we come to the Red Room. This is properly Mrs. Lincoln's reception room. Everything in it is new except the splendid old painting of Washington. The fine pictures of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert and other members of the royal family, presented to the President of the United States for the President's Mansion by the Prince of Wales, that hung upon the walls of this room, are missing. I learn that they were removed to Wheatland with Mr. Buchanan. He also took away from the White House a large number of the Chinese or Japanese curiosities intended, upon presentation, for the mansion. All these are missing." According to my recollection, the Prince of Wales presented to Miss Lane three engravings, one of his mother, another of his father, and the third of himself. They were hung in the Red Room. Whether Miss Lane took them with her to Wheatland I cannot say, but presume she did, as *they were her property*. There were no Chinese curiosities presented during your administration. The Japanese curiosities presented, I believe, through the late Commodore Perry to Ex-President Pierce remained in the House when I ceased to be Commissioner of Public Buildings. The presents made to you by the Japanese Embassy were by *your directions* deposited by me in the Patent Office with *the original list* of the articles. I took a receipt for them from the proper officer, which I delivered to you, and doubt not you still have it in your possession. My first impulse on reading the base insinuation of the Herald's correspondent was to publish immediately a flat and indignant contradiction of it; but on consultation with a friend who seemed to consider it unworthy of notice I concluded I had better write to you and learn from you whether silent contempt, or a publication stamping it with falsehood, would be the most proper method of treating the slanderous imputation.

Very truly yours,

JNO. B. BLAKE.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 523.

TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

LANCASTER 20 December 1861.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have this moment received your favor of yesterday. I wrote to you yesterday on the subject of your letter & suggested a mode of contradiction. I now find that you took the precaution of having a list made of the Japanese articles & obtaining a receipt from the Patent Office. The statement may, therefore, be made still stronger.

The friend who advised you not to publish a contradiction committed a great mistake. The charge is mean & contemptible, as well as false, & if it were true, it would make me a mean & contemptible fellow. It is just the thing to circulate freely. I have no doubt Lord Lyons will give you a statement in writing concerning the pictures.

Wishing you many a Merry Christmas & many a Happy New Year, I remain always your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND 21 December 1861.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have just received your kind letter of the 19th Instant, & in answer I think I may say that my health is restored. The swelling in my legs & feet has disappeared, & I now walk to Lancaster with great enjoyment.

You advise me to keep quiet, which I shall do for the present. I shall bide my time, under a perfect conviction that my adminis-

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 525.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 572.

tration can not only be satisfactorily defended but triumphantly vindicated.

I wish with all my heart that I could be with you at the meeting of your children & grandchildren on Christmas; but this is out of the question. The happy faces & innocent gambols of children have always had a charm for me. May you live many days in health & prosperity to enjoy such meeting around the family altar. As I cannot be present at the hospitable Board, I hope you will drink my health in a glass of the old Custom House Madeira.

I am, like you, a passenger in the omnibus; & although nothing could tempt me again to become a driver, yet I cannot avoid feeling deep anxiety for my Country. I trust the danger of a war with England has passed away; but if such a disastrous event should occur it will be a war created by the Newspapers.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. Leiper & all your patriarchal family, I remain

Very respectfully your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: GEORGE G. LEIPER.

P. S. Your sweetheart Miss Lane has been absent several weeks in New York, & I do not expect her home until after the New Year. I sincerely wish she felt more of a disposition than she does to bind herself in the silken cords which you describe.

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## TO MISS LANE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 25 December 1861.

MY DEAR HARRIET/

I have received your favor of yesterday & am happy to inform you that Doctor Blake has contradicted the picture & Japanese falsehood in the National Intelligencer of yesterday. You have probably ere this seen it. . . .<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection. Inaccurately printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 572.

<sup>2</sup> A paragraph relating to a matter purely private is here omitted.

I have passed a very sober, quiet, & contented Christmas. I went to hear Mr. Krotel in the morning & came immediately home. It is the first day for many a day that I have had no visitors. Miss Hetty & myself dined together very pleasantly.

Poor Prince Albert! I think in many respects he was to be pitied. His position was very awkward; but he sustained it with becoming dignity. He could not assume the position of William the 3d & say: If I am not to be King, & am to be placed in a subordinate position to the Queen, I shall return to Holland.<sup>1</sup>

I intend to give Harry Magraw a dinner on Saturday next; but I can not rival the dinner which he gave when last at home. No such dinner has ever been given in Lancaster, at least to my knowledge.

I have not received a line from Judge Black nor seen him since he called here after meeting you in Philadelphia. I am glad he has been appointed reporter to the Supreme Court.

I enclose you an invitation from Mr. and Mrs. Wharton. I have answered my own & informed them that I would send yours to you in New York. You will judge whether you ought to answer.

I wish you to remain at New York just as long as this may be agreeable to yourself & to Mr. & Mrs. Roosevelt. You would have a dull time here at this season.

Please to remember me in the very kindest terms to the Judge & Mrs. Roosevelt, with my ardent wishes that they may pass many years together in peace, prosperity, & happiness.

Yours affectionately,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MISS LANE.

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### TO MR. HENRY.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND 28 December 1861.

MY DEAR JAMES/

I have received yours of yesterday with the Carriers' Address of the Bulletin. This affords but feeble evidence that public opinion is changing in my favor in Philadelphia, where it

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<sup>1</sup> A sentence is here omitted.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

will be the last to change. I am inclined to think that throughout the Country they now begin to do me justice. At last the vindication will be triumphant.

Very great injustice has been done to Mr. Cobb. There is not a more honest man in the United States than he. I am much indebted to Mr. Thompson & him for having succeeded in reducing the expenses of the Government to a lower figure than any person acquainted with the subject had deemed possible. After Mr. Lincoln's election, when Mr. Cobb took ground in favor of practical as well as theoretical secession, it became evident that we must part. I am glad, however, that we parted in friendship. Mr. Toucey, without the least reason, has been made a sort of scapegoat. The charges against him are about as true as that concerning the "six millions' worth of Indian Bonds."

I am very happy to learn that you are doing "tolerably well" in your business. Energy, industry, & perseverance will enable you finally to succeed.

With the compliments of the season, & earnestly wishing you long life, health, & prosperity,

I remain yours affectionately

JAMES BUCHANAN.

JAMES BUCHANAN HENRY, ESQ.

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TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 30 Dec: 1861.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 27th Instant & thank you most kindly for your efficient agency in correcting the slander of the Correspondent of the New York Herald. Lord Lyons' letter is quite satisfactory. . . .<sup>2</sup>

Thank Heaven there is now no danger of an immediate war

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 573.

<sup>2</sup> The passage here omitted relates to a private matter.

with England. That Mason & Slidell would be surrendered to John Bull I had expected for some time, from the Editorials & correspondence of the New York Herald, which is evidently in the confidence of the administration or some members of it.

I know nothing of what is going on in Washington except from the papers. From them I perceive that Judge Black has been appointed Reporter of the Supreme Court & that General Cameron has conferred upon Mr. Holt the appointment of auditor of General Fremont's accounts. I believe that Stanton & Horatio King have not yet been provided for.

I have not seen an account of your marriage; but this I expect will come along some day. How happy I should be to see you here! I now soon expect Miss Lane.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

1862.

TO MISS LANE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, 3 January, 1861 [1862].

MY DEAR HARRIET:—

I have received your favor of the 31 ultimo directed to me as the Hon: James Buchanan, & not ex-President Buchanan, which I was glad to observe. In compliance with its request, I enclose you a check. . . .<sup>2</sup>

There are things in Mr. Seward's letter to Lord Lyons which will furnish the British Government with a pretext to take offence if they so desire. When we determined to swallow the bitter pill,<sup>3</sup> which I think was right, we ought to have done it gracefully & without pettifogging.

No notice seems to have been taken of the publication of

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection. Inaccurately printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 576.

<sup>2</sup> The omission here relates to a purely personal matter.

<sup>3</sup> The surrender of Mason and Slidell.



Mr. Seward's letter to Mr. Adams of the 30th November. It may have been well to write this letter; but to publish it under the authority of the Government was unwise. It states: "I have never for a moment believed that such a recognition [of the Confederate States] could take place without producing immediately a war between the United States & all the recognizing powers. I have not supposed it possible that the British government could fail to see this," etc., etc. This will be treated as an impotent threat by that malignant anti-American Journal the Times & possibly by a portion of the British people.

You may tell Judge Roosevelt that I have been no little astonished to find in the excellent Journal of Commerce articles to prove that the Federal Government possess under the Constitution the power to issue a paper currency & to make it a legal tender; and this upon the principle that it has not been expressly prohibited. They seem to have lost sight of the great principle that Congress have no power except what is expressly granted or necessarily implied.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Webster did once darkly intimate on the floor of the Senate that Congress might authorize the issue of a paper currency, & whilst it was opposed by the entire Democratic, it met no favor with the Whig party. Mr. Clay's most strongly urged argument against the Independent Treasury was that it might lead to a Government paper currency. I do not recollect that in my day it was ever claimed even by the most violent consolidationist that a creditor could be forced to take either the paper of the Bank of the U. S. or the Government in payment of a debt. If the Judge has it convenient, I wish he would look at my speech in favor of the Independent Treasury delivered in the Senate on 29 Sep. 1837.

I am sorry that there was nobody to give you a Christmas present except good Mrs. Roosevelt. This as a token of her esteem was worth far more than a hundred presents from idle fashionable coxcombs. You will always have her as a friend, should you continue to deserve her friendship, which I trust you ever may.

Yours affectionately,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis, in a note to this sentence, *Life of Buchanan*, II. 577, says: "Mr. Buchanan must have referred to communications, not to editorial opinions. The editorial views of the *Journal of Commerce* have always been opposed to the views which he controverted."

TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 11 Jan: 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received yours of the 9th Instant & can assure you I do not entertain the least idea of making any publication at present, but shall remain where you have placed me, on the rock of St. Helena. I am content to bide my time & not even give to the world the official documents which I have collected & arranged, although they would place me above reproach.

I think, under all the circumstances, the administration acted wisely in surrendering Mason & Slidell. I say nothing of the accompanying Despatch of Seward or of the publication of his letter to Mr. Adams.

Miss Lane has not yet returned from New York, & I know not when to expect her.

From your friend *always*

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: GEO. G. LEIPER.

TO MISS LANE.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,  
16 January 1861 [1862].

MY DEAR HARRIET/

I have received yours of the 11th Instant; & now enclose you a letter just received under the frank of Mr. Blair.

The invitation from Mr. and Mrs. Ward surprises me. Please to tell Judge Roosevelt that I have no loose copy of my speech in favor of the Independent Treasury, or it would afford me much pleasure to send it to him.

Do you know why our friend Schell is so much in Washington? Is he a witness or a party to any investigation there?

I have not & have not had any intention of writing a history

<sup>1</sup>Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 578.

<sup>2</sup>Buchanan Papers, private collection. The paragraph relating to Stanton is imperfectly printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 522.

of my administration. What I have done has been to collect & prepare for publication, should this become necessary, a reference to such public & other authentic documents as would fully justify me in all I did & all I did not do since the election of Mr. Lincoln in November last. For the present I have not the least idea of publishing it.

To tell me that a Paper like the Herald, which is read by every body, has no influence is vain. It has a most malign influence both at home & abroad. Its influence was evil in encouraging the secessionists to believe they might depart in peace, & then after its editor had been pursued by a mob, its influence in exasperating the people of England against us has been most unfortunate. It is considered there as a reflex of public opinion in this Country, & especially of that of the great city of New York.

Well, our friend Stanton has been appointed Secretary of War. I presume, without knowing, that this has been done by the influence of General M'Clellan. I have reason to believe they are very intimate. What are Mr. Stanton's qualifications for that, the greatest & most responsible office in the world, I cannot judge. I appointed him Attorney General when Judge Black was raised to the State Department, because his professional business & that of the Judge, especially in California cases, were so intimately connected that he could proceed in the Supreme Court without delay. He is a sound, clear-headed, persevering, & practical lawyer, & is quite eminent especially in Patent cases. He is not well versed in public, commercial, or constitutional law; because his professional duties as a County Lawyer never led him to make these his study. I believe he is a perfectly honest man & in that respect differs from his immediate predecessor. He never took much part in Cabinet Counsels, because his office did not require it. He was always on my side & *flattered me ad nauseam*. . . . <sup>1</sup>

Remember me in great kindness to the Judge & Mrs. Roosevelt.

Yours affectionately

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MISS HARRIET R. LANE.

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<sup>1</sup> A paragraph relating to an entirely different and personal matter is here omitted.

TO MR. KING.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, January 28th, 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 23d instant, and had heard from Miss Lane on the subject of the slippers. She has not yet returned from New York. I desire to repeat my warm thanks to Miss King for her valued token of regard.

I have just read the rhapsody of Mr. Holt over the appointment of Mr. Stanton, and confess I am utterly at a loss to conjecture what he means by "the intensely tragic struggles that marked the closing days of the late administration." If any such existed, I am ignorant of them. Mr. Holt himself certainly had a tragical face when he announced to the Cabinet at the Capital on the 4th March the receipt of the Despatches from Major Anderson, and the publication of his letter communicating them to Mr. Lincoln will doubtless excite disagreeable, I will not say tragical, feelings in the mind of the Major. I am very sorry I have never been able to obtain a copy of the strictures of General Scott on Mr. Holt's letter.

You mistake:—Mr. Lincoln has begun at the foot. You do not recollect that you ranked the Attorney General. So in the ascending scale you will come next. Good luck to you!

I do most earnestly hope that our army may be able to do something effective before the 1st of April. If not, there is great danger not merely of British but of European interference. There will then be such a clamor for cotton among the millions of operatives dependent upon it for bread, both in England and on the Continent, that I fear for the blockade.

From my heart I wish Stanton success, not only for his own sake but that of the country. He is a great improvement on his immediate predecessor. I believe him to be a truly honest man, who will never sanction corruption, though he may not be quite able to grapple with treason as the lion grapples with his prey. I would rather he had not retained the assistant of the late Secretary and appointed another of the same; but they are both keen and energetic.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Partly printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 579.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. King and Annie Augusta,  
I remain, very respectfully,

Your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: HORATIO KING.

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TO MR. PARKER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

3 February 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 28 ultimo & was gratified to learn that you had arrived safely in New York. I am sorry to believe that a letter from me would do you no good at Washington. Nevertheless, it is proper I should state that when South Carolina, in 1850 or 1851, invited Virginia to co-operate with her in the adoption of secession measures, you were active & efficient in procuring the passage of Resolutions by the General Assembly of your State, refusing to comply with the invitation. I know that you went to Richmond for this purpose, on the advice of the late Col: King & myself, & I learned at the time, from reliable sources, that you contributed much in producing this happy result. I do not recollect the precise terms of the Resolutions either of South Carolina or Virginia.

Would that Virginia had persisted in this wise & patriotic course! Had she done so, she might have become the happy instrument of bringing back the Cotton States & restoring the Union. Her rash conduct in rushing out of the Union after these States had, by assaulting & capturing Fort Sumter, commenced the civil war, has done herself irreparable injury, as well as inflicted a great calamity upon the whole country.

What have been your opinions concerning secession after 1851 & until you left the United States I cannot state, though I have no reason to doubt their loyalty. You certainly never ex-

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 579.

pressed any different sentiment to me in all our intercourse. I need not say that I am wholly ignorant of your present opinions or purposes on this subject.

I need not assure you that it would afford me sincere satisfaction to serve you. In case of need, I would advise you to appeal to Mr. Lincoln himself. He is, I believe, an honest & patriotic man, with a heart in the right place. The bad health of Mrs. Parker will be a prevailing argument with him in favor of permitting you to return to your family after more than a year's absence in the public service, unless powerful reasons should exist against such a permission.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

JOHN A. PARKER, ESQ.

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### TO SENATOR SAULSBURY.<sup>1</sup>

(*Private.*)

WHEATLAND 8 February 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

Many thanks for your able speech on the expulsion of Mr. Bright! I have read it with much interest. The question was purely judicial, & ought to have been so considered. Still, even in this point of view, there was room for honest differences of opinion. Whilst I had reason to believe, at the time, that Mr. Bright sympathised with the ultras of the Cotton States in condemning my absolute refusal in December, 1860, on the demand of the self-styled Commissioners from South Carolina, to withdraw the Troops from Charleston, yet I had no idea, until I read his letter & late speech, that he remained in the same state of feeling after the inauguration of the hostile Confederacy.

I had always entertained the warmest friendship for Mr. Bright, & manifested this on every proper occasion whilst I was President; & therefore felt deep sorrow when I saw this letter to the President of that Confederacy, recommending a gentleman

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



whose business it was to dispose of a great improvement in fire arms. And this, it now appears, was so much a matter of course that he has forgotten he had ever written such a letter.

But I intended only to thank you for a copy of your speech & to request that you would send me copies in pamphlet of any other speeches which you may make.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON : WILLARD SAULSBURY.

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TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

10 February 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 5th Instant. Glad as I would have been to see Mr. Carlisle & yourself during the last week, I was almost satisfied you did not come. The weather was very unfavorable; & besides, mirabile dictu! I had a sharp onset from the gout. Your visit, I hope, will not be long delayed. The birds already begin to sing at early morn & the willows are assuming the livery of Spring.

And so Mr. Pearce thinks it is a matter of no importance that I should go down to history as having put my hand into the Treasury & drawn out \$8000 more than was appropriated, to gratify my personal vanity in furnishing the White House! Thus the fact stands recorded in the proceedings of Congress, & in the debate in the House it is made by Mr. Stevens a precedent for allowing Mr. Lincoln to draw from the Treasury \$11,000 more than was appropriated. This is the staple of Mr. Stevens's argument, the Representative from my own district. And does Mr. Pearce suppose, in opposition to these uncontradicted statements before the Senate & the House, that any man will ever

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 580.

pore over the appropriation Bills to correct the error? Alas for craven fear!

Although I shall never again become an active politician, I intend to take care of Mr. Bright, should there be any necessity for it, as I think there never will be. His day in Indiana was passed before his last election to the Senate, if election it could be fairly called. He can no longer block the way against the elevation of such able, eloquent, & rising men as Mr. Voorhees.

In any other state of public affairs than the present, the gentlemen of the Cabinet referred to by Thurlow Weed would have immediately contradicted his charge. Had it even been true, their own honor required this. Since the origin of the Government there has been no case of violating cabinet confidence except one, & the great man who was betrayed into it by violent political prejudice was destroyed. It is moral perjury; & no cabinet could exist if the consultations were not held sacred. The charge of Thurlow Weed is, therefore, in effect, that some one member of the Cabinet has disclosed to him a cabinet secret & authorized him to publish it to the world. General Dix, now at the head of the Police in Baltimore though worthy of a better place, is one of the *dramatis personæ*, though he was not in the Cabinet until a considerable time after Floyd had resigned. The very day after the explosion in regard to the Indian Bonds, I informed Mr. Floyd, through his relative, Mr. Breckinridge, that I would expect him to resign. He did so, & informed me that Floyd appeared to be very much struck with the information. Up until that time Floyd had been uniformly opposed to the secession party. The escape of Major Anderson, two or three days thereafter, from Fort Moultrie to Fort Sumter at midnight, first spiking his cannon & burning his gun carriages, afforded Floyd an opportunity, as he supposed, to expire in a blaze of glory.

I am at a loss to know what to do in this matter. I know the enemy wish to draw my fire in a straggling manner. I wish it at once to embrace & refute the whole line of charges; & I know that when the entire truth is told, my enemies will be confounded & by the blessing of God I shall be safe at every point. I shall decide nothing for two or three days. I may hear from some member of the Cabinet implicated. It would be strange if General Dix should patiently submit to the charge, though not a member of the Cabinet at all at the time. You may read this

letter to our friend Carlisle & converse with him on the subject, of course confidentially.

Miss Lane desires to be very kindly remembered to you.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

P. S. I forgot to observe that the escape of Major Anderson from Fort Moultrie to Fort Sumter took place on Christmas night, 1860; but Weed has it in February, 1861. Floyd left the Cabinet in December.

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TO MR. KING.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

February 10th, 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 6th, and am rejoiced to learn that Annie Augusta is about to be married, with your approbation. I need not say how heartily I wish that she may be happy.

It is strange that you have not seen Mr. Holt's letter to Lieutenant Governor Stanton, dated at St. Louis, January 16th, on the appointment of Mr. Stanton. The following extract from it was published in the Harrisburg Patriot and Union of the 27th of January:

The selection of the Hon. Edwin M. Stanton as Secretary of War has occasioned me unalloyed satisfaction. It is an immense stride in the direction of the suppression of the rebellion. So far as I can gather the popular sentiment, there is everywhere rejoicing over the appointment; but that rejoicing would be far greater did the people know, as I do, the courage, the loyalty, and the genius of the new Secretary, *as displayed in the intensely tragic struggles that marked the closing days of the last administration.* He

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Partly printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 582.

is a great man intellectually and morally, a patriot of the true Roman stamp, who will grapple with Treason as the lion grapples with his prey. We may rest assured that all that man can do will in his present position be done to deliver our poor bleeding country from the bayonets of traitors now lifted against its bosom.

That Stanton is an able and an honest man there can be no doubt. I wish him success with all my heart and soul, and he promises very fairly. Still, you will admit that the above is somewhat extravagant. I most sincerely regret that Mr. Holt should have accepted an auditorship under Cameron for the settlement of Fremont's accounts. I feared from the first that this would prove unfortunate for him, and I think the signs of the times now point to such a result. I have no doubt he will do his duty faithfully.

Apropos—you speak of Bright's expulsion from the Senate—I will copy a letter which I have just written to Senator Saulsbury, who sent me his speech upon the subject. . . . <sup>1</sup>

I thank you for the extract from the Star containing an account of Mrs. Lincoln's party. I am glad there was no dancing. I had refused this, even on the carpet, to the earnest request of the Prince of Wales. The reasons are obvious why Balls should not be given in the White House.

Your conversation with Stevenson was strange. If there be any member of Jeff Davis's cabinet in favor of reconstruction, Hunter must be the man.

I trust that our late victories may be the prelude to those more decided, and that ere the Spring opens we may be in such a condition as to afford no pretext to England and France to interfere in our domestic affairs.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: HORATIO KING.

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<sup>1</sup> Here follows an extract from the letter of Mr. Buchanan to Senator Saulsbury, Feb. 8, 1862, *supra*.

TO MRS. BOYD.<sup>1</sup>*(Private.)*

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

17 February 1862.

MY DEAR MADAM/

I was happy to receive your note of the 10th Instant. It reminded me of earlier & happier times, which I trust may speedily return. If I could be instrumental in restoring peace to the land, in the manner you suggest or in any other manner, this would fill my heart with joy. But I see not what can now be done by any man in the North. The Confederate States commenced this unhappy war for the destruction of the Union, & until they shall be willing to consent to its restoration, there can be no hope for peace. We should hail their return under the Constitution with delight. But the idea of a recognition of their independence, & a consequent dissolution of the Confederacy which has rendered us prosperous & happy in peace & triumphant & glorious in war cannot be entertained for a moment. This would be the death knell of their own safety & welfare, & would destroy the prestige & character of our Country throughout the world.

With every wish for your happiness, I remain very respectfully

Your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MRS. LINN BOYD.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 583.

TO MR. STANTON.<sup>1</sup>*(Private.)*

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

25 February 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have thought it a duty of friendship to inform you that the two letters which you describe in yours to me of the 16th May last: to wit, that of "the 24th of April, the day after the Baltimore riot," and that written "on the Blue Tuesday, the day before the arrival of the New York Regiments," never reached me. I hope they may not be in improper hands.

I deem it my right to ask for a copy of the orders issued by the Secretary of War to the Commander of the Brooklyn about the last of January or beginning of February, 1861, by which the safety of Fort Pickens was secured, together with the telegraphic despatch which preceded them, addressed to Messrs. Hunter, Slidell, & Bigler (I believe), of the Senate. Your particular attention must have been drawn to this subject a few days after the 4th of March, 1861, because in your letter to me of the 14th of that month you state your recollection to be that Mr. Holt & General Scott concurred with me in that arrangement, which you say "when proposed in Cabinet was approved by Judge Black & myself."

Although you now belong to an administration which has manifested intense hostility to myself, & whose organ, at least in this State, is the Philadelphia Press, yet, notwithstanding our changed relations, I wish you all the success & glory in your efforts to conquer the rebellion & restore the Union which your heart can desire. If I might be permitted to intimate a word of advice, it would be to write as little as possible for the public eye. Let your actions speak for themselves, & so far as I can judge, they have spoken loudly in your favor.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. EDWIN M. STANTON.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 583.



TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

26 February 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 21st Instant & owe you many thanks for your prompt & successful attention to my requests. You do all things well. It is strange that Mr. Fessenden should have doubted as to the propriety & necessity of correcting his assertion that I had expended \$8000 more in furnishing the White House than had been appropriated by Congress for this purpose.

I am very happy to learn that you intend to pay us a visit, & this "*before a great while*;" & you were entirely correct in informing our friend Carlisle that he would, also, receive a cordial welcome. The sooner the better; but the Country now presents its most gloomy aspect. It is covered by snow; & this is not sufficient to enable us to sleigh. In a day or two I hope the snow will disappear. Please drop a line to me two or three days before your departure from Washington, so that I may certainly be at home on your arrival & send for you to Lancaster.

Many thanks for the pamphlet! It is indeed a scathing criticism on Seward's Diplomatic volume.

Your interview with Stanton was entirely satisfactory. Whenever I choose to dissipate all the slanders against my administration, this can be done effectually. It is strange, passing strange, that the barefaced falsehood of the stealing of arms by Floyd (who is certainly no better than he ought to be) which was nailed to the counter more than a year ago by the Report of the Committee on Military Affairs from Mr. Stanton should have been repeated again & again, until it is now almost universally believed. I observe in Col: Maynadier's letter, published in the National Intelligencer, a statement of what is the truth in regard to Floyd. He was persistently & openly opposed to secession & the seceders, & was not on terms with their leaders until the exposure of his connection with the abstracted Bonds. Informed at that time it was expected he should resign, he retired

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 584.

with a flourish, under the assumed cover of being a violent secessionist & therefore unwilling to remain longer in the Cabinet.

Bright has got what he deserved, though the precedent may be & doubtless is dangerous. He was thoroughly in league with Davis, &c., at least in their hostility to myself. His attack upon me in his speech was without any foundation, & was doubtless intended to enlist Republican votes.

Miss Lane desires me to renew to you "the assurance of her distinguished consideration."

Ever your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

P. S. Maynadier, in his letter dated Feb: 3, 1862, to the Potter Committee, says: "He (Floyd) had recently published over his own signature [this was probably about Nov: 1860] in a Richmond paper a letter on this subject [secession] which gained him high credit at the North for his boldness in rebuking the pernicious views of many in his own State." I do not wish you to hunt for this letter. Its worth would not be equal to the trouble. It was, I believe, published in the Richmond Examiner, though possibly the Enquirer. It would now be a great curiosity. Nobody, I presume, in Washington files these papers.

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### FROM JUDGE BLACK.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, March 1, 1862.

MY DEAR SIR:

Your letter was handed me by Mr. Baldwin. It grieved me to perceive a tone of melancholy running through it. You have in my opinion no cause for low spirits. Your fame will be taken care of by history; though the passions or the interests of the hour may cloud it for the present.

You speak of laying facts before the public. I fear you forget that *there is no public*. There is nothing left in this country but a "*government*." I will not presume to advise you on a subject which concerns yourself more nearly than it concerns me; but I cannot withhold the expression of my

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

opinion that you were right when you resolved to let your vindication await the revival of the laws and the restoration of the popular mind to its wholesome normal condition. I know that in the mean time you must suffer annoyances, submit to misconstruction, and be the victim of many malicious slanders. It is hard for a man who has lived all his lifetime in a free country to endure this. But better that than worse. The breath that kindled these grim fires of persecution has the power to blow them into sevenfold wrath and plunge us in the flames. The tribunal that condemned you against evidence will drown your defence with the sound of its drums. But I submit to your better judgment. I only entreat you to remember that I oppose as far as I may the publication of any book or pamphlet on the subject of your administration at this time. I predict that whatever may become of this war—no matter which party is successful—a vindication of your policy and general conduct will be easily and successfully made in the course of a few months.

It is not to be denied that we all committed some errors. I am sure I did, and I think you did. I am quite willing that these shall be blazoned to the world and that the whole truth shall be made known for the sake of showing exactly how it was and by whom the present calamities were brought on the country. But at this moment the time is out of joint.

I am afraid you think that I have been less alive to your interests than I ought. If so, you are mistaken. I have never thought myself able to do you but one service; and that was to see justice done to your reputation. I have never for one moment relinquished the determination to perform my whole duty in this respect. I would have laid aside all other business and excuse and attended to that alone during the past summer and winter, if I had supposed it a fit and proper season.

There is one other thing which has given me trouble and pain. I am afraid that your views and mine are so far out of accord that you will never approve mine. Whether I differ from you or not is a matter of no moment. But for me to come before the public with any view which you would regard as unsound, unfavorable to yourself, or inconsistent with your own grounds of defence, would be as unpleasant a thing as I could do, except that of pledging myself upon a statement which I do not believe in. It is no more than candor to say that I think you have conceded too much to the policy of the present administration, and that at one period of your own administration you conceded too much to the South. But your desire to save the nation from anarchy, civil war, spoliation, and slaughter, and the sacrifices you made to that end, should place you high in the affections of your countrymen, and will put you high on the list of great patriots.

I certainly never received a letter from you which I did not reply to. Yours of 10 Jan. has therefore miscarried, or else my answer missed its way.

I have written home for the paper you desire. Unless, therefore, Mr. Stanton has it, you will receive it in a very short time.

The opinion is easily got and shall be sent.

I am most truly

Your affectionate friend

J. S. BLACK.

HON. JAS. BUCHANAN.

P. S. When Genl. Cass communicated to me his intention to resign, I pressed him to remain in office. After he sent his letter to you, I called on him several times to see if he could be induced to withdraw it. After it was settled that I should be his successor, Thompson continued the endeavor to get a withdrawal of the resignation. I certainly heard, either from Genl. Cass or from Mr. Thompson or from both, that the General was willing to take it back and say no more about it. I told you this fact, but you said that you preferred to keep it.

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### TO JUDGE BLACK.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 4 March 1862.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have received your favor of the 1st Instant; but, I regret, without the opinion. I am happy to say you are entirely mistaken in supposing that I suffer from low spirits. I am astonished at my own health & spirits & the zest with which I enjoy the calm pleasures with which Providence has blessed me. It is true that I regret I had not called the attention of the public nearly a year ago to certain historical facts furnished by official documents, which would have relieved me from imputations affecting my character & in some degree that of my party; but I excuse myself by the consideration that I was too unwell to suffer my mind to play with a healthy & vigorous action.

I am not at all astonished to learn that *your "views and mine are so far out of accord;"* & that in my administration I first conceded too much to the South, & afterwards too much to the present administration. My policy was well matured, at least by myself, & was clearly & distinctly presented in the messages of Dec., 1860, & 8 January, 1861. From these I never consciously swerved. The first was approved by every member of the Cabinet except Thompson & Cobb, & to the last I believe there was no objection. After a full & careful review, I would not, if I could, alter this policy in any particular. I should have

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 585.

been glad could you have taken time to run your eyes over the paper delivered to you by Mr. Glossbrenner, & to have informed me of any mistakes which in your judgment I may have made in regard to facts. Our opinions may be at variance, but I should be truly sorry to present ourselves in opposition to each other in regard to matters of fact.

As to my course since the wicked bombardment of Fort Sumter:—it is but a regular consequence of my whole policy towards the seceding States. They had been informed over & over again by me what would be the consequence of an attack upon it. They chose to commence civil war, & Mr. Lincoln had no alternative but to defend the country against dismemberment. I certainly should have done the same thing had they begun the war in my time; & this they well knew. I am not conscious that the bad conduct of the South towards me, sustained, I believe, by Bright alone of the Northern Senators, has prejudiced my judgment against them. He has got his reward, though perhaps not in a very legitimate manner.

I hope you may be able to find the paper, the last sheets of which were handed to you by Mr. Stanton. It would be a great loss to me.

On your postscript in relation to Gen. Cass I shall not remark, further than to say it is not in accordance with my recollection.

Notwithstanding our misunderstandings, I hope we may ever continue to be friends. Towards you my heart is in the right place. If I should publish against your advice, it will be because throughout my life I have refuted slander on the spot when worthy of refutation, without regard to consequences. I think I owe this to the Democracy of Pennsylvania, which is now exhibiting unmistakable symptoms of a new & vigorous life, & indications of a continued attachment to myself.

I presume I need scarcely invite you to pay me a visit. This I promise, however, that if you will come & bring Mrs. Black along, I shall not introduce any subject which will give you pain, or on which we can possibly differ.

From your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. J. S. BLACK.

TO MR. TOUCEY.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 19 March 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I cannot deny myself the pleasure of expressing the great satisfaction I have felt in perusing your testimony before Hale's Committee. I never saw it until a few minutes ago. I knew well how unjust the charges were against you & anticipated your triumphant vindication whenever you should be called upon to make it, & therefore it is not more conclusive than I had expected.

Forney set the report afloat that I was engaged in writing a history of my administration, life, & times. There is no truth in this; but it is true that I have collected & arranged the necessary documents, which might be put in form at any moment, to justify all my proceedings in regard to the South since the election of Mr. Lincoln. Your testimony alone was wanting to make them perfect. I wish very much I could see you. I could scarcely ask you to pay me a visit, unless you should take this on your way should you have occasion to visit Washington. I need not say how cordial would be our welcome to Mrs. Toucey & yourself.

How strange have been the fortunes of your colleagues Holt, Dix, & Stanton! I was somewhat mortified when Holt accepted an auditorship under Cameron to investigate Fremont's accounts. I have a warm regard for General Dix, & think he deserves a better place than the head of the Baltimore police, where he can acquire no glory. I wish he were in the field at the head of a proper command.

My health is excellent, considering my age & late severe illness. I am contented, & should enjoy myself very much but for the troubles of the Country. Still, my spirits are cheerful. After a careful review of all that I have done or omitted to do since the unfortunate 6th November, 1860, I can lay my hand upon my heart & say that I have nothing to repent of. Our constant agreement in all important measures is a solace & comfort, & endears you to me in a peculiar manner. May you & yours be ever prosperous & happy!

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 586.



With my warm & respectful regards to Mrs. Toucey, as well as those of Miss Lane, I remain,  
Your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON : ISAAC TOUCEY.

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FROM JUDGE BLACK.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, March 25, 1862.

MY DEAR SIR :

Some time ago I was told, I know not by whom, that the New York newspapers had represented Mr. Stanton as behaving in your Cabinet like a bully, and I was asked if he would not contradict it. I did not see the article myself—did not know its contents—and merely understood it to be one of those fulsome laudations which those papers bestow on people who are in place. To-day at court Mr. Carlisle told me that you had written Dr. Blake on the subject. I asked Dr. B. what the article was, and he has just now sent me a letter from Thurlow Weed, cut from the Herald. Weed's letter is now *lying* before me.

Of course everybody who has the slightest knowledge of what was occurring at that time knows this story of Weed's to be a sheer fabrication made out of the whole cloth. Nor has it the slightest plausibility. I think no man of common sense can believe any part of the letter, for it is all of a piece from beginning to end. It was hardly meant for this country, but was probably considered "a good enough Morgan" for the London Observer, to which it was written. Certainly it has done nobody any harm, nor any good either, unless it has given Mr. Stanton some pleasure to see himself done into heroics, and about that I know nothing, though I certainly should have inquired into the state of his feelings if I had seen the thing when it first appeared on this side of the water.

Mr. Carlisle's idea seemed to be that your indignation at this silly falsehood had impelled you to the publication you contemplate. Is it worth while? If the article is worth contradicting at all, would it not be better to contradict it directly? How would it do for you to address Mr. Stanton, Genl. Dix, Mr. Holt, and me, or either of us, and ask the question whether it is true? If I had seen the thing before it got stale, I would have volunteered a contradiction on my own hook, and I would not stop to do so now if you make it a point.

The court adjourned to-day (Monday). As soon as I get through some work it has left me, I shall go home. I will not be at York more than a day or two without going to see you. My regards to Miss Lane.

Most truly yours, &c.

J. S. BLACK.

HON. JAMES BUCHANAN.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

TO MR. HENRY.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 29 March 1862.

MY DEAR JAMES/

Yours of the 24th has been duly received. I do not believe that Mr. Stanton will give Edward an appointment. It is my impression he has become a thorough Lincoln Republican. The change of the name of Fort Calhoun to Fort Wool will exasperate the people of the Cotton States, men, women, & children; & this without the least necessity. Mr. Calhoun died ten years before the trouble commenced; & his eulogy was pronounced by Clay, Webster, & Winthrop. It was my misfortune on many occasions to differ from him politically during the last years of his life; but nobody ever disputed his lofty patriotism, his inflexible integrity, & his commanding talents.

I send you a one dollar note, with which I desire you to purchase "The American Almanac & Repository of Useful Knowledge" for the year 1862—published at Boston by Crosby, Nichols, Lee & Company. You can send it by Mail, as it will come to me free.

I shall be happy to see Judge Sharswood & give him a cordial welcome to Wheatland.

Annie is well, & seems to enjoy herself.

Yours affectionately

JAMES BUCHANAN.

JAMES BUCHANAN HENRY, ESQ.

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FROM THE PRINCE OF WALES.<sup>2</sup>

JAFFA, March 29, 1862.

DEAR MR. BUCHANAN:—

Permit me to request that you will accept the accompanying portrait as a slight mark of my grateful recollection of the hospitable reception and agreeable visit at the White House on the occasion of my tour in the United States.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>2</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 590.

Believe me that the cordial welcome which was then vouchsafed to me by the American people, and by you as their chief, can never be effaced from my memory.

I venture to ask you, at the same time, to remember me kindly to Miss Lane, and believe me, dear Mr. Buchanan,

Yours very truly,

ALBERT EDWARD.

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## TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 2 April 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your kind letter of the 31 ultimo. I had duly received yours of the 20th & ought to have answered it; but truly had nothing to say. Besides, I excuse myself by the agreeable anticipation that I expect soon to enjoy the pleasure of seeing you.

I am glad you brought the attention of Judge Black to Weed's letter. I have heard from him since & expect every day to see him. Is it not strange that four members of my Cabinet, all of whom I had treated with the utmost kindness & parted from in the most friendly & indeed affectionate manner, should have witnessed without contradiction a statement made by an official of Government in a foreign newspaper, that they had one after the other offered me the grossest insult? Had such a scene transpired in my Cabinet, they should not have been in office fifteen minutes. I do not distrust the friendship of Judge Black. On the contrary, I have no doubt of his devoted attachment; but I presume he is unwilling to stand alone in the contradiction of the slander. General Dix might perhaps join him; but let it pass. My time will come.<sup>2</sup>

I am decidedly in favor of prosecuting the war with vigor to a successful termination; but still I consider it bad policy un-

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Partly printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 587.

<sup>2</sup> In his letter of March 31, 1862, to which this is a reply, Dr. Blake said: "I hope my letter of the 20th inst. reached you. Since then I met Judge Black on the avenue, who told me that Mr. Carlisle had spoken to him about

necessarily to exasperate the Southern people. The insult offered to the memory of Mr. Calhoun, by changing the name of Fort Calhoun to Fort Wool, will sink deep into the hearts of the people of the Cotton States—men, women, & children. It was my fortune to differ from this great & pure man on many important questions; but his character was so elevated that Clay and Webster and others pronounced eulogies upon him in the Senate & in the House after his decease. He died ten years before the commencement of the troubles, & even before the Compromise of 1850. I do not think the administration will derive

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Weed's letter to the London Observer—that he had heard of it before, and understood it to be a laudation of Mr. Stanton. He said he had not seen it, but expressed a wish to do so. I immediately visited a periodical store and after a long search succeeded in finding it in the N. York Herald of the 4th inst., and sent him a copy of it." (Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.)

In another letter to Mr. Buchanan, of April 5, 1862, Dr. Blake says: "I deem it proper to advise you that a few days since I met Genl. Dix, and in the course of conversation I asked him if he had seen Weed's letter. He answered that he had not, and on explaining to him the character of it he expressed his surprise, and remarked that he was not at that time a member of the cabinet. He said he would mention the subject to Stanton; but whether he did or not I am unable to say, as he left the city early the next morning. Stanton, it is thought, has his eye upon the Presidency, and Holt is supposed to be looking in the same direction although he does not expose his arm with the same vigorous effort to clutch the tempting fruit. I hardly think either under existing circumstances will be disposed to contradict Weed's statement, however incumbent they might feel it if differently situated." (Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.)

The article of Thurlow Weed here referred to is quoted in a letter of Augustus Schell to Judge Black, of July 28, 1863, printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 518. Mr. Weed's story was that when Major Anderson removed his garrison from its defenceless position at Fort Moultrie to Fort Sumter, Mr. Floyd, then Secretary of War, demanded that he be immediately remanded to Fort Moultrie, and threatened to resign unless it was done; that President Buchanan summoned his cabinet and laid the matter before it, when Mr. Stanton, in opprobrious terms, declared that he would resign if the proposal was to be carried out, and was followed in this declaration by Messrs. Black, Holt, and Dix, in immediate succession. Judge Black, in his reply to Mr. Schell, August 6, 1863, says: "The story you transcribe from the London paper is wholly fictitious. Major Anderson passed his garrison to Fort Sumter, not in February, 1861, but in December, 1860. General Dix was not then a member of the cabinet." The letter of Judge Black to Mr. Schell is among the Buchanan Papers of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and is partly printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 519-520.

much honor from having attained his memory. But “*de gustibus non disputandum.*” Had he been living, I do not think we should be involved in our present difficulties.

We live in the hope of soon seeing you. This is a charming Spring day & the Country begins to assume the livery of early Spring.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

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TO MR. KING.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 1st May, 1862.

MY DEAR SIR,—

I have received your favor of the 27th inst. With my opinions, steadily maintained for more than a quarter of a century, I could not have advised you to accept the appointment [appraisement] of the negroes under the late Emancipation Act, yet I feel much gratified with the token of friendly regard manifested by your letter. If you have done wrong by accepting, you shall never be upbraided by me for it. On the contrary, I ardently hope you may never have occasion to regret it.

We lately had a visit from our friend, Dr. Blake, of Washington. It was quite refreshing to us to learn so much news and so many things relating to our friends in that city.

I sincerely trust that your daughter enjoys good health and is happy.

I have a debt due me in Maryland of a highly meritorious character; but the debtor, after years of delay, now says he cannot be touched on account of an act of the Legislature suspending all proceedings against debtors in that State up till

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<sup>1</sup>Turning on the Light, by Horatio King, pp. 202-203.

November next. If convenient, I would thank you to send me a copy of this act (of course not certified), or the substance of it.

With my kind regards to Mrs. King, I remain  
Very respectfully your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. HORATIO KING.

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FROM MR. FLINN.<sup>1</sup>

*(Private and Confidential.)*

WASHINGTON CITY, May 14, 1862.

MY DEAR SIR:

I herein send you a letter from our excellent, true, and good friend Mr. J. Glancy Jones. I wrote him a letter some weeks since, desiring to know if he would meet me at Wheatland. He answered me and said, "I should be most happy to meet you at Wheatland, but my professional business requires constant attention at my office for some time to come."

The very kind letter you wrote me, and for which I return you my best thanks, I enveloped and left at Mr. Stanton's elegant Mansion on K Street, opposite Franklin Square. I was at the War Department one day and asked Mr. Stanton, in as polite manner as I could, to return me your letter, as he had not referred to it, and has not yet returned it. I did not ask him for an office. At my request, as a matter of business, he referred a paper, for an acquaintance, to the Quarter Master General, Brig. Genl. Meigs, one of the most arrogant men, in my humble opinion, in these United States. Any other Sec'y of War would have done that much.

Four members of your Cabinet hold prominent places under President Lincoln. Mr. Horatio King has accepted the most unpopular place in this City. Like Mr. Holt, King's "flight has not been very lofty;" he went up under you like a sky-rocket and has come down like a stick. I would not have the office for five times the salary, although I am a few hundred dollars better off than a poor man.

I believe if Mr. Stanton had not accepted the War Office, he would have visited you in company with me. Last summer Mr. Stanton and I met at the corner of 17th St. and Penna. Avenue. We sat on the side of the fence and talked about the war and the unhappy state of the Union. Among other topics, I spoke of Mr. Holt's address to the people of Kentucky—I read it in the Lancaster Intelligencer—and said that Mr. Holt in his

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



speeches made in his travelling tour had not uttered one word in defence of you and your administration, and that not one of your Cabinet had published a word in your defence since you retired to private life. Stanton replied and said that Holt was a selfish man; that he should have vindicated you instead of praising Lincoln and abusing Breckinridge. You took Mr. Holt from retirement, I will not say obscurity, and he is now an aspirant for the Presidency. Mr. Dix, Mr. Stanton, and Mr. Holt have fixed their hopes upon filling the Executive Chair of the White House.

Mr. J. M. Carlisle handed me Thurlow Weed's letter, clipped from the New York Herald of the 4th of March last. I said to Mr. Carlisle, I will show this to Stanton, and with your consent will say to Mr. Stanton I received this from your hands and that you requested me to invite his attention to the letter. Mr. Carlisle assented very cordially. Monday last, two weeks since, I handed the Herald slip to Mr. Stanton in his room in the War Department in open audience, as this is the only time I can see him. Stanton read the paragraph, in which he figured in your Cabinet meeting making a speech, and the remarks of the other members named. After he read it (I observed he was greatly embarrassed), he returned it and made no reply. I retired. A few days after this interview I met him near the War Department, and he said, Flinn, you don't believe all you read in the newspapers. He said he had Dr. Ives of the New York Herald arrested and sent to Fort McHenry; that Ives had written many abusive articles on you, published in the Herald; and that this is *one* of the reasons why he had him arrested.

Mr. Carlisle expected Judge Black would have answered Weed's falsehoods before this, as he promised Mr. C. to call at his house. Fear of Lincoln's and Seward's Penitentiary, La Fayette, and Fort Warren, has greatly weakened the power of the pen, which in this country has in times past wielded more power than the sword. I showed the Weed letter to Mr. Horatio King, and asked him to submit it to the criticism of Mr. Holt. He looked scared and began to chaw, remarking I had better see him myself. I said, You are more familiar with Mr. Holt than I, and he might be more frank with you than with a partial acquaintance. Power and patronage have a wonderful and mysterious influence upon the minds of men, who should be governed by higher and nobler motives than mere self.

I may the last of this or the first of next month call and see you at Wheatland. I have been painting my dining-room and bath-room. My hands were not in a writing condition, or I would have written earlier.

The address of the leaders of Judge Douglas to the Democracy of the United States has created a stampede in the Republican ranks. I read the address in proof-sheet by request of Mr. Ancona of Reading, one of the signers. Mr. Leazer, the Representative from Greene and Fayette Cos., Penna., is one of your warm friends and admirers.

Mrs. Flinn sends you her kindest regards.

From your friend, very respy.,

WM. FLINN,  
260 F St.

HON. JAMES BUCHANAN.

TO MR. FLINN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 17 May 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I feel much obliged to you for your kind, amusing, & interesting letter of the 14 Instant. I presume the history of free Countries presents no parallel to the neglect or refusal of those members of my Cabinet implicated to contradict the statement made by Thurlow Weed that they had insulted me outrageously in Cabinet Council. This utterly false & unfounded Statement was made by a quasi official in a foreign Newspaper & published in a foreign Country where I had been Minister, without producing a remark from any one of those confidential advisers whom I had always treated with the utmost kindness. Well, be it so, *for the present*.

I did not suppose at the time I wrote you the letter that it would be of service to you with Mr. Stanton. You are too good a Democrat to receive employment from a Republican administration.

The most agreeable part of your letter is the expression of your intention to pay me a visit the latter part of this month or the beginning of the next. *The sooner the better*. You shall at any time & at all times receive a cordial welcome. You may from this pass across to Reading & visit our friend Jones.

You speak lightly of Horatio King. Whilst I am sorry he accepted the agency to appraise the negroes of the District, yet he has treated me with kindness & respect since I left Washington. He & his daughter have paid me a visit, & he has cheerfully & promptly attended to several matters for me.

Miss Lane will leave home for some weeks early next week, or I would ask you to bring Mrs. Flinn along. Please to remember me to her very kindly, & believe me always to be sincerely yr. friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WILLIAM FLINN, ESQUIRE.

*Come soon.*

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>*(Private.)*

WHEATLAND 17 May 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I take the chances that this acknowledgment of the receipt of your acceptable letter of the 15th may reach you before you leave for New York. I wish you would pass this way either going to or returning from that City; but this would be too much to ask. This Country is now clothed with rich & beautiful verdure. The next time you come, & I trust this may be before long, pray bring your trunk with you.

I have neither seen Judge Black nor heard from him since you left us. I hope none of my friends will trouble him again about the Thurlow Weed letter.

In all free Countries, fidelity to the head of the Government on the part of the members of his Cabinet whilst belonging to his political family has ever been considered both a point of honor & duty, & has rarely, if ever, been violated. Whilst at liberty to contract new political engagements, if they should betray to their new friends or the public what had transpired in the old Cabinet, without the consent of its head, they would be held justly infamous. If, therefore, the statement made by Weed were as true as it is infamously false, the irresistible implication would be that he had received the information from a member of the Cabinet; & thus all of those implicated would be exposed to the charge until it was brought home to the guilty individual.

Thurlow Weed is understood to be an agent of the Government. To serve them he abandoned his position as head of the Lobby in the New York Legislature & went to Europe. Whilst in London he publishes a letter in a London Journal & attaches his own name to it, stating that Messrs. Stanton, Holt, Dix, & Black had grossly insulted me in Cabinet Council & had used expressions to me which if true would have caused their instant removal. Is this falsehood, proceeding from a quasi official source, contradicted by any of them? No,—they all stand mute. They will not contradict Weed, who is powerful & stands high with Mr. Lincoln. They are willing to profit with their new

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Partly printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 588.

masters by the slander, rather than speak a word of truth in justice to the old President who had ever treated them with the utmost confidence & kindness. I was going to say, such is human nature; but I will not say it, because the case is without a parallel.

Notwithstanding all, I except Judge Black. I believe his heart is in the right place; and his conduct has proceeded from constitutional timidity, & not from any want of regard towards myself.

Miss Lane intends to leave here for New York on Thursday next, & will be at James Henry's. She would be much gratified to meet you there.

I fear the carriage is a bad speculation.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

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### TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 27 May 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 22d, & am always rejoiced to learn that you are healthy and happy. Neither of us can say:—

“That in our youth we never did apply  
Hot and rebellious liquors to our blood,”

though, with the blessing of Providence, we both enjoy “a green old age.” If we have not been abstemious, we have been temperate, & used the blessings in our way without abusing them.

Miss Lane is now absent. She left here on Thursday last on a visit to her Uncle at Oxford Church & her cousin, James B. Henry, on Staten Island. You always live in her kind memory.

I feel more & more deeply every day for the sad condition

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 588.

of our Country. May the Almighty Governor of the World pardon the national sins & corruptions of this people, & restore the Constitution & the Union & perpetuate our civil & religious liberties! Without His interposition, I can see no determinate end to our troubles.

My health is as good as usual.

Ever your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: GEORGE G. LEIPER.

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TO MR. FLINN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 12 July 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 10 Instant; & you will please to accept my thanks for the two missing numbers of the Globe & the Congressional Directory. Be good enough, also, to present my acknowledgments to Mr. Shiel for the Directory & say I appreciate it highly as a token of his regard. By the same Mail, I received a copy of the Blue Book under the frank of Mr. Hunter & directed in the handwriting of good Mr. Faherty. I presume you caused this to be sent; but whether or not, you need give yourself no further trouble in this matter.

Miss Lane regrets very much that she was not at home during your visit; but hopes that it will not be long until you repeat it.

I am glad to learn that Miss Jones has made so good a match. I hope her father may be prosperous & happy. I have not heard from him nor of him since a few days after you left Wheatland.

I wish I had some news which might interest you. The suspense was dreadful whilst the fight was proceeding near

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 591.

Richmond, & I felt greatly relieved when I learned that General McClellan & our brave army had escaped destruction. His strategy was admirable, but I am at loss to know why he did not occupy his present position from the beginning. Mystery yet hangs over the whole affair, though I feel very confident that when all is unravelled McClellan will be justified.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. Flinn, I remain always  
Truly your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WILLIAM FLINN, ESQUIRE.

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TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 12 July 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have not answered your letter of the 1st Instant, awaiting the arrival of Stackpole & Pierre; but as they have not yet come to hand, I presume I need not expect them. I shall be right glad to see them, though much obliged to you for your prudent caution.

I am glad to learn that Senator Wright talks of paying me a visit on his return to Indiana. You may say to him that if he should, he shall receive a cordial welcome. . . .<sup>2</sup>

We felt the deepest anxiety during the fight before Richmond; & I felt a heavy pressure removed from my heart when we learned that McClellan & his brave army were safe. Without doubt his change of position in the face of a superior army evinced great skill in strategy; but why was the wrong position originally selected? I still feel great confidence in McClellan, & with all my heart wish him success. Still, there is a mystery in the whole affair which time alone can unravel.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 591.

<sup>2</sup> The passage here omitted relates to a private matter.



Please to remember me, most kindly, to Messrs. Carlisle & Riggs. How happy I should be to see both or either of them! Judge Black is, I believe, in York, but does not write to me or visit me. Mr. Shunk was here a few days ago, who came from Judge Black's in company with our C. J. Lowry. The Judge had too bad a headache to leave home, & therefore sent his son-in-law.

Miss Lane desires to be most kindly remembered to you.

From your friend always,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

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TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 25 July 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favors of the 10th and 23d Instant. Miss Lane is greatly indebted to you for your photograph, which has been placed in her Book.

How long I ought in silence to bear Forney's slanders is now a serious question. I have not seen his late speech at Harrisburg, but understand from a friend that it charges me with being in constant correspondence with foreign Governments, urging the recognition of the Confederacy. This is in substance a charge of treason, without the shadow of a pretext, & ought to be punished by an appeal to our Courts of justice. Miss Lane desires to be kindly remembered to you.

Your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON : GEORGE G. LEIPER.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 593.

TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 6 August 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I write to thank you for your letter of the 24 ultimo & for Mr. O'Sullivan's letters. He is an able & clear-headed man. I have read them according to your request.

Forney is one of those inflictions which give me but little trouble. His malignity without a cause almost amounts to insanity. He cannot avoid abusing me. In this manner base minds relieve themselves from the weight of obligations to their benefactors.

I have never read his speech. You speak of it as if it had been a meeting of "the Republican & Douglas parties." You may rest assured that no such thing exists as a Douglas party in this State. The former members of it are now thorough Democrats. The very few exceptions, such as Forney, George Laumax, Knox, & Dougherty, are the blackest of Black Republicans.

They had "a war meeting" in Lancaster on Saturday last. It was not large, though many good Democrats came to attend it. The first speaker was Forney, and he led off in abuse of me. Many then left. It is represented as an overwhelming meeting; but it was, in truth, a comparatively small affair.

Forney is doing Mr. Lincoln's administration great injury. He is exasperating the Democratic party against it, because he speaks as if he were on confidential terms with the President, and he is Secretary of the Senate.

The Democratic party are the support of the war for the Constitution and the Union *as they were*; & yet they are denounced as traitors by such scamps as Forney. This cannot long endure. But I have spent too much time on such a man as Forney.

We have had much company during the last month; but we hear nothing of Carlisle or Riggs. How rejoiced we shall always be to see you!

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 594.

My own health continues good. Miss Lane desires to be most kindly remembered to you.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

P. S. Would it not be well to send the carriage to New York for sale?

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TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 15 August 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I was much gratified to learn from yours of the 9th Instant the favorable opinions entertained of my administration by Messrs. Saulsbury & Washington. Such opinions begin to be a little more common than they were a year ago; & they will be still more common in another year. . . .<sup>2</sup>

We are all alive here with recruiting, & many, very many of our best young men are entering the service. The present is believed to be the crisis of the war; & for this reason they come forward to do their duty.

I wish I had some news to communicate which would be agreeable to you. We are proceeding in the same "John Trot" style as when you left us. My health is as good as usual, & better than I deserve. Miss Lane desires to be most kindly remembered to you.

By the bye, I enclose you a copy of a note addressed by me to Mr. Lincoln on the 21 October last, which neither he nor his private Secretary has ever had the civility to answer. I presume he has been made to believe by Forney, who enjoys & will betray his confidence, that I have opposed him in the war for the restoration of the Union. I would make no appeal to him; but

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 594.

<sup>2</sup> The passage here omitted relates to a purely private matter.

if you are on terms with the private Secretary, you might inquire after the Books. They came to me from poor Benton, whose name is written in each volume.

From your friend as ever

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

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TO MR. HUGHES.<sup>1</sup>

(*Private.*)

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

1 September 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received yours of the 29th ultimo, & regret that you should have been prevented from paying me your intended visit. I need not say you should have received a cordial welcome. I hope you may ere long pay Wheatland a visit, when, without reserve, we can talk over together the sad condition of the Country, & the course which ought to be pursued by the Democratic party in the present dangerous emergency. It has ever been the bulwark of the Constitution & the Union; & its action must now be in unison with its glorious past history. My age & my position admonish me to leave it in the care & guidance of younger men, & I rejoice that you are now at the helm.

The next Congress will be by far the most important that has ever assembled under the Constitution; & I deeply regret that any difficulty should have arisen in the selection of a Candidate for the York District. I had hoped that Mr. Glossbrenner might have been the man, because I know he is sufficiently firm & true for the crisis. If my interference should promise any good, I shall interfere. The impression was strong some weeks ago in York County against Mr. Bailey, whom they did not then trust.

Yours very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

F. W. HUGHES, ESQUIRE.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 595.

TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 28th October 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I thank you sincerely for your kind letter of caution & advice. I now send you my answer to General Scott. This was forced upon me by a voluntary attack which was little expected. Although I did not altogether trust him, our relations since I ordered him to Washington had been of a very friendly character.

You will please to take the document immediately to the office of the *Intelligencer*. I cannot doubt that they will publish it immediately. I leave it unsealed, so that you may first look over it if you think proper; but you will please to seal it up before delivery. Mr. Carlisle might also see it, if this could be done without delay.

I would thank you to immediately acknowledge its receipt. I should be glad if you could examine the proof; but this I presume is impossible.

I have no doubt they will publish it, though their remarks preceding Scott's statement are unfriendly. This I could not have expected from Col: Seaton.

Your friend always

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

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ANSWER TO GENERAL SCOTT.<sup>2</sup>

[October 28, 1862.]

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER:

On Wednesday last I received the *National Intelligencer* containing General Scott's address to the public. This is throughout an undisguised censure of my conduct during the last

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 595.

<sup>2</sup> *National Intelligencer*, Nov. 1, 1862.

months of the Administration, in regard to the seven Cotton States now in rebellion. From our past relations I was greatly surprised at the appearance of such a paper. In one aspect, however, it was highly gratifying. It has justified me, nay, it has rendered it absolutely necessary, that I should no longer remain silent in respect to charges which have been long vaguely circulating, but are now endorsed by the responsible name of General Scott.

I. The first and most prominent among these charges is my refusal immediately to garrison nine enumerated fortifications, scattered over six of the Southern States, according to the recommendation of General Scott, in his "views" addressed to the War Department on the 29th and 30th of October, 1860. And it has even been alleged that if this had been done it might have prevented the civil war.

This refusal is attributed, without the least cause, to the influence of Governor Floyd. All my Cabinet must bear me witness that I was the President myself, responsible for all the acts of the Administration; and certain it is that during the last six months previous to the 29th December, 1860, the day on which he resigned his office, after my request, he exercised less influence on the Administration than any other member of the Cabinet. Mr. Holt was immediately thereafter transferred from the Post Office Department to that of War; so that from this time until the 4th March, 1861, which was by far the most important period of the Administration, he performed the duties of Secretary of War, to my entire satisfaction.

But why did I not immediately garrison these nine fortifications, in such a manner, to use the language of General Scott, "as to make any attempt to take any one of them by surprise or coup-de-main ridiculous"? There is one answer both easy and conclusive, even if other valid reasons did not exist. There were no available troops within reach which could be sent to these fortifications. To have attempted a military operation on a scale so extensive by any means within the President's power would have been simply absurd. Of this General Scott himself seems to have been convinced, for on the day after the date of his first "views" he addressed (on the 30th October) supplemental views to the War Department, in which he states: "*There is one (regular) company in Boston, one here, (at the Narrows,)*



*one at Pittsburg, one at Augusta, (Ga.) one at Baton Rouge"—in all, five companies only within reach to garrison or reinforce the forts mentioned in the views."*

Five companies—four hundred men—to occupy and reinforce nine fortifications in six highly excited Southern States! The force "within reach" was so entirely inadequate that nothing more need be said on the subject. To have attempted such a military operation with so feeble a force and the Presidential election impending, would have been an invitation to collision and secession. Indeed, if the whole American army, consisting then of only sixteen thousand men, had been "within reach," they would have been scarcely sufficient for this purpose. Such was our want of troops that, although General Scott, believing, in opposition to the opinion of the committee raised in the House of Representatives, that the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln might be interrupted by military force, was only able to assemble at Washington, so late as the 4th March, six hundred and fifty-three men, rank and file of the army. And, to make up this number, even the sappers and miners were brought from West Point.

But why was there no greater force within reach? This question could be better answered by General Scott himself than by any other person. Our small regular army, with the exception of a few hundred men, was out of reach, on our remote frontiers, where it had been continuously stationed for years, to protect the inhabitants and the emigrants on their way thither against the attacks of hostile Indians. All were insufficient and both General Scott and myself had endeavored in vain to prevail upon Congress to raise several additional regiments for this purpose. In recommending this augmentation of the army, the General states in his report to the War Department of November, 1857, that "it would not more than furnish the reinforcements now greatly needed in Florida, Texas, New Mexico, California, Oregon, Washington, (T.), Kansas, Nebraska, Minnesota, leaving not a company for Utah." And again, in his report of November, 1858, he says:

This want of troops to give reasonable security to our citizens in distant settlements, including emigrants on the plains, can scarcely be too strongly stated; but I will only add, that as often as we have been obliged to withdraw troops from one frontier in order to reinforce another, the weakened points have been instantly attacked, or threatened with formidable invasion.

These "views" of General Scott exhibit the crude notions then prevailing even among intelligent and patriotic men on this subject of secession. In the first sentence the General, whilst stating that "to save time, the right of secession may be conceded," yet immediately says, "this is instantly balanced by the correlative right on the part of the Federal Government against an *interior* State or States to re-establish by force, if necessary, its former continuity of territory." (For this he cites "Paley's Moral and Political Philosophy, last chapter." It may be there, but I have been unable to find it.) Whilst it is difficult to ascertain his precise meaning in this passage, he renders what he did *not* mean quite clear in his supplementary "views." In these he says: "It will be seen that the 'views' only apply to a case of secession that makes a *gap* in the present Union." The falling off, say of Texas, or of all the Atlantic States, from the Potomac south, (the very case which has occurred,) was not within the scope of General S.'s "provisional remedies;" that is to say, to establish by force, if necessary, the continuity of our territory. In his "views" he also states as follows: "But break this glorious Union by whatever line or lines that political madness may contrive, and there would be no hope of reuniting the fragments except by the laceration and despotism of the sword. To effect such result, the intestine wars of our Mexican neighbors would, in comparison with ours, sink into mere child's play." In the General's opinion, "a smaller evil (than these intestine wars) would be to allow the fragments of the great Republic to form themselves into new Confederacies, probably four." He then points out what ought to be the boundaries between the new Unions; and at the end of each goes so far as even to indicate the cities which ought to be the capitals of the three first on this side of the Rocky mountains, to wit, "Columbia, South Carolina," "Alton or Quincy, Illinois," and "Albany, New York," excluding Washington City altogether. This indication of capitals contained in the original now in my possession is curiously omitted in the version published in the National Intelligencer. He designates no capital for the fourth Union on the Pacific. The reader will judge what encouragement these views, proceeding from so distinguished a source, must have afforded to the secessionists of the Cotton States.

I trust I have said enough, and more than enough, to con-

vince every mind why I did not, with a force of five companies, attempt to reinforce Forts Jackson and St. Philip, on the Mississippi; Fort Morgan, below Mobile; Forts Pickens and McRee, in Pensacola Harbor; Fort Pulaski, below Savannah; Forts Moultrie and Sumter, Charleston Harbor; and Fort Monroe, in Virginia.

These "views," both original and supplementary, were published by General Scott in the *National Intelligencer* of January 18, 1861, at the most important and critical period of the Administration. Their publication at that time could do no possible good, and might do much harm. To have published them, without the President's knowledge and consent, was as much in violation of the sacred confidence which ought to prevail between the commanding General of the army and the Commander-in-Chief as it would have been for the Secretary of War to publish the same documents without his authority. What is of more importance, their publication was calculated injuriously to affect the compromise measures then pending before Congress and the country, and to encourage the secessionists in their mad and wicked attempt to shatter the Union into fragments. From the great respect which I then entertained for the General, I passed it over in silence.

It is worthy of remark that soon after the Presidential election representations of what these "views" contained, of more or less correctness, were unfortunately circulated, especially throughout the South. The Editors of the *National Intelligencer*, in assigning a reason for their publication, state that both in public prints and in public speeches allusions had been made to them, and some misapprehensions of their character had got abroad.

II. and III. General Scott states that he arrived in Washington on the 12th, and, accompanied by the Secretary of War, held a conversation with the President on the 15th December. Whilst I have no recollection whatever of this conversation, he doubtless states correctly that I did refuse to send three hundred men to reinforce Major Anderson at Fort Moultrie, who had not then removed to Fort Sumter. The reason for this refusal is manifest to all who recollect the history of the time. But twelve days before, in the annual message of the 3d December, I had urged upon Congress the adoption of amendments to the

Constitution of the same character with those subsequently proposed by Mr. Crittenden, called the "Crittenden Compromise." At that time high hopes were entertained throughout the country that these would be adopted. Besides, I believed, and this correctly, as the event proved, that Major Anderson was then in no danger of attack. Indeed, he and his command were then treated with marked kindness by the authorities and people of Charleston. Under these circumstances, to have sent such a force there would have been only to impair the hope of compromise, to provoke collision, and disappoint the country.

There are some details of this conversation in regard to which the General's memory must be defective. At present I shall specify only one. I could not have stated that on a future contingent occasion I would telegraph "Major Anderson of Fort Moultrie to hold the Forts (Moultrie and Sumter) against attack;" because, with prudent precaution, this had already been done several days before, through a special messenger sent to Major Anderson for this very purpose. I refer to Major Buell, of the army.

The General's supplementary note of the same day, presenting to me General Jackson's conduct in 1833, during the period of nullification, as an example, requires no special notice. Even if the cases were not entirely different, I had previously determined upon a policy of my own, as will appear from my annual message. This was, at every hazard to collect the customs at Charleston, and outside of the port, if need be, in a vessel of war. Mr. Colcock, the existing collector, as I had anticipated, resigned his office about the end of December, and immediately thereafter I nominated to the Senate, as his successor, a suitable person prepared at any personal risk to do his duty. That body, however, throughout its entire session declined to act on this nomination. Thus, without a collector, it was rendered impossible to collect the revenue.

IV. General Scott's statement alleges that "the Brooklyn, with Captain Vogdes's company alone, left the Chesapeake for Fort Pickens about January 22d, and on the 29th President Buchanan, having entered into a *quasi* armistice with certain leading seceders at Pensacola and elsewhere, caused Secretaries Holt and Toucey to instruct in a joint note the commander of the war vessels off Pensacola, and Lieutenant Slemmer, com-

manding Fort Pickens, to commit no act of hostility, and not to land Captain Vogdes's company unless the Fort should be attacked." He afterwards states, within brackets, "That joint note I never saw, but suppose the armistice was consequent upon the meeting of the Peace Convention at Washington, and was understood to terminate with it."

These statements betray a singular want of memory on the part of General Scott. It is scarcely credible that this very joint note, presented in such odious colors, was submitted to General Scott on the day it was prepared, (29th January,) and met his entire approbation. I would not venture to make this assertion if I did not possess conclusive evidence to prove it. On that day Secretary Holt addressed me a note, from which the following is an extract: "*I have the satisfaction of saying that on submitting the paper to General Scott he expressed himself satisfied with it, saying that there could be no objection to the arrangement, in a military point of view or otherwise.*" This requires no comment. That the General had every reason to be satisfied with the arrangement will appear from the following statement:

A revolutionary outbreak had occurred in Florida; the troops of the United States had been expelled from Pensacola and the adjacent navy yard; and Lieutenant Slemmer, of the artillery, with his brave little command, had been forced to take refuge in Fort Pickens, where he was in imminent danger every moment of being captured by a vastly superior force. Owing to the interruption of regular communications, Secretary Holt did not receive information of these events until several days after their occurrence, and then through a letter addressed to a third person. He instantly informed the President of the fact, and reinforcements, provisions, and military stores were despatched by the Brooklyn to Fort Pickens without a moment's unnecessary delay. She left Fortress Monroe on the 24th of January.

Well-founded apprehensions were, however, entertained at the time of her departure that the reinforcements, with the vessels of war at no great distance from Fort Pickens, could not arrive in time to defend it against the impending attack. In this state of suspense, and whilst Lieutenant Slemmer was in extreme peril, Senators Slidell, Hunter, and Bigler received a telegraphic despatch from Senator Mallory of Florida, dated at Pensacola, on the 28th January, with the urgent request that

they should lay it before the President. This despatch expressed an earnest desire to maintain the peace, as well as the most positive assurance that no attack would be made on Fort Pickens if the present status should be preserved.

This proposal was carefully considered, both with a view to the safety of the fort and to the unhappy effect which an actual collision either at that or any other point might produce on the Peace Convention then about to assemble at Washington. The result was that a joint despatch was carefully prepared by the Secretaries of War and Navy accepting the proposal, with important modifications, which was transmitted by telegraph on the 29th January to Lieutenant Slemmer and to the naval commanders near the station. It is too long for transcription; suffice it to say, it was carefully guarded at every point for the security of the fort and its free communication with Washington.

The result was highly fortunate. The Brooklyn had a long passage. Although she left Fortress Monroe on the 24th January, she did not arrive at Pensacola until the 6th February. In the mean time Fort Pickens, with Lieutenant Slemmer, (whose conduct deserves high commendation,) and his brave little band, were placed, by virtue of this arrangement, in perfect security until an adequate force had arrived to defend it against any attack. The fort is still in our possession. Well might General Scott have expressed his satisfaction with this arrangement. The General was correct in the supposition that this arrangement was to expire on the termination of the Peace Convention.

V. But we now come to an important period, when dates will be essentially necessary to disentangle the statement of General Scott. The South Carolina Commissioners were appointed on the 22d, and arrived in Washington on the 27th December. The day after their arrival it was announced that Major Anderson had removed from Fort Moultrie to Fort Sumter. This rendered them furious. On the same day they addressed an angry letter to the President, demanding the surrender of Fort Sumter. The President answered this letter on the 30th December by a peremptory refusal. This brought forth a reply from the Commissioners on the 2d January, 1861, of such an insulting character that the President instantly returned it to them with the following endorsement: "This paper, just presented to the President, is of such a character that he declines



to receive it." From that time forward all friendly, political, and personal intercourse finally ceased between the revolutionary Senators and the President, and he was severely attacked by them in the Senate, and especially by Mr. Jefferson Davis. Indeed, their intercourse had previously been of the coldest character ever since the President's anti-secession message at the commencement of the session of Congress.

Under these changed circumstances, General Scott, by note on Sunday, the 30th December, addressed the following inquiry to the President:

Will the President permit General Scott, without reference to the War Department, and otherwise as secretly as possible, to send two hundred and fifty recruits from New York harbor to reinforce Fort Sumter, together with some extra muskets or rifles, ammunition, and subsistence? It is hoped that a sloop of war and cutter may be ordered for the same purpose to-morrow.

The General seems not to have then known that Mr. Floyd was out of office.

Never did a request meet a more prompt compliance. It was received on Sunday evening, December 30th. On Monday morning I gave instructions to the War and Navy Departments, and on Monday evening General Scott came to congratulate me that the Secretaries had issued the necessary orders to the army and navy officers, and that they were in his possession. The Brooklyn, with troops, military stores, and provisions, was to sail forthwith from Fortress Monroe for Fort Sumter. I am therefore utterly at a loss to imagine why the General, in his statement, should have asserted that "the South Carolina Commissioners had already been many days in Washington and no movement of defence (on the part of the United States) was permitted." These Commissioners arrived in Washington on the 27th December; General Scott's request was made to the President on the 30th. It was complied with on the 31st, and a single day is all that represents the "many days" of the General.

Again, General Scott asserts in the face of these facts, that the President refused to allow any attempt to be made to reinforce Fort Sumter, because he was holding negotiations with the South Carolina Commissioners. And still again, that "afterwards Secretary Holt and myself endeavored, in vain, to obtain a ship of war for the purpose, and were finally obliged to employ

the passenger steamer 'Star of the West.' " Will it be believed that the substitution of the "Star of the West" for the powerful war steamer Brooklyn, of which he now complains, was by the advice of General Scott himself? I have never heard this doubted until I read the statement.

At the interview already referred to between the General and myself, on the evening of Monday, the 31st of December, I suggested to him that although I had not received the South Carolina Commissioners in their official capacity, but merely as private gentlemen, yet it might be considered an improper act to send the Brooklyn with reinforcements to Fort Sumter until I had received an answer from them to my letter of the preceding day; that the delay could not continue more than forty-eight hours. He promptly concurred in this suggestion as gentlemanly and proper, and the orders were not transmitted to the Brooklyn on that evening. My anticipations were correct, for on the morning of the 2d of January I received their insolent note, and sent it back to them. In the meantime, however, the General had become convinced, by the representations of a gentleman whom I forbear to name, that the better plan, as the Secretaries of War and the Navy informed me, to secure secrecy and success and reach the fort, would be to send a fast side-wheel mercantile steamer from New York with the reinforcement. Accordingly the "Star of the West" was selected for this duty. The substitution of this mercantile steamer for the Brooklyn, which would have been able to defend herself in case of attack, was reluctantly yielded by me to the high military judgment of General Scott.

The change of programme required a brief space of time; but the Star of the West left New York for Charleston on the evening of the 5th January. On the very day, however, when this ill-fated steamer left New York, a telegram was despatched by General Scott to Colonel Scott to countermand her departure; but it did not reach its destination until after she had gone to sea. The reason for this countermand shall be stated in the language of Secretary Holt, to be found in a letter addressed by him to Mr. Thompson, the late Secretary of the Interior, on the 5th March, 1861, and published in the National Intelligencer. Mr. Holt says:

The countermand spoken of (by Mr. Thompson) was not more cordially sanctioned by the President than it was by General Scott and myself; not

because of any dissent from the order on the part of the President, but because of a letter received that day from Major Anderson, stating, in effect, that he regarded himself as secure in his position; and yet more from intelligence which late on Saturday evening (5th January, 1861) reached the Department, that a heavy battery had been erected among the sand hills at the entrance to Charleston harbor, which would probably destroy any unarmed vessel (and such was the *Star of the West*) which might attempt to make its way to Fort Sumter. This important information satisfied the Government that there was no present necessity for sending reinforcements, and that when sent they should go, not in a vessel of commerce, but of war. Hence the countermand was despatched by telegraph to New York; but the vessel had sailed a short time before it reached the officer (Colonel Scott) to whom it was addressed.

A statement of these facts, established by dates, proves conclusively that the President was not only willing but anxious in the briefest period to reinforce Fort Sumter.

On the 4th January, the day before the departure of the *Star of the West* from New York, as General Scott in his statement admits, succor was sent to Fort Taylor, Key West, and to Fort Jefferson, Tortugas Island, which reached these points in time for their security. He nevertheless speculates on the consequences which might have followed had the reinforcements not reached their destination in due time; and even expresses the extraordinary opinion that, with the possession of these Forts, "the rebels might have purchased an early recognition."

I shall next advert to the statement that the expedition under Captain Ward, "of three or four small steamers belonging to the Coast Survey," was "kept back by something like a truce or armistice, (made here,) embracing Charleston and Pensacola harbors, agreed upon between the late President and certain principal seceders of South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, &c. And this truce lasted to the end of the Administration." Things altogether distinct in their nature are often so blended in this statement that it is difficult to separate them. Such is eminently the case in connecting the facts relative to Charleston with Pensacola.

Having already treated of the charge of having kept back reinforcements from Pensacola, I shall now say something of the charge of having also kept them back from Charleston. Neither a truce, nor quasi truce, nor anything like it, was ever concluded between the President and any human authority concerning

Charleston. On the contrary, the South Carolina Commissioners, first and last, and all the time, were informed that the President could never surrender Fort Sumter, nor deprive himself of the most entire liberty to send reinforcements to it whenever it was believed to be in danger, or requested by Major Anderson. It is strange that General Scott was not apprised of this well-known fact. It was, then, with some astonishment that I learned from the statement of the General that he had, on the 12th March, 1861, advised that Major Anderson should be instructed to evacuate the fort as soon as suitable transportation could be procured to carry himself and his command to New York. A military necessity for a capitulation may have existed in case there should be an attack upon the fort, or a demand for its surrender; but surely none such could have existed for its voluntary surrender and abandonment.

Probably that to which the General means to refer was not the quasi but the actual truce of arms concluded at Charleston on the 11th January, 1861, between Governor Pickens and Major Anderson, without the knowledge of the President. It was on the 9th of January that the *Star of the West*, under the American flag, was fired upon in the harbor of Charleston by order of Governor Pickens. Immediately after this outrage Major Anderson sent a flag to the Governor, stating that he presumed the act had been unauthorized, and for that reason he had not opened fire from Fort Sumter on the adjacent batteries; but demanding its disavowal, and, if this were not sent in a reasonable time, he would consider it war, and fire on any vessel that attempted to leave the harbor. Two days after this occurrence, on the 11th January, Governor Pickens had the audacity to demand of Major Anderson the surrender of the fort. In his answer of the same date the Major made the following proposition: "Should your Excellency deem fit, previous to a resort to arms, to refer this matter to Washington, it would afford me the sincerest pleasure to depute one of my officers to accompany any messenger you may deem proper to be the bearer of your demand." This proposition was promptly accepted by the Governor, and, in pursuance thereof, he sent on his part Hon. I. W. Hayne, the Attorney General of South Carolina, to Washington, whilst Major Anderson deputed Lieutenant Hall, of the United States Army, to accompany him. These gentlemen arrived

together in Washington on the evening of the 13th January, when the President obtained the first knowledge of the transaction. But it will be recollected that no time intervened between the return of the *Star of the West* to New York and the arrival of the messenger bearing a copy of the truce at Washington within which it would have been possible to send reinforcements to Fort Sumter. Both events occurred about the same time.

Thus a truce, or suspension of arms, was concluded between the parties, to continue until the question of the surrender of the fort should be decided by the President. Until this decision Major Anderson had placed it out of his own power to ask for reinforcements, and equally out of the power of the Government to send them without a violation of public faith. This was what writers on public law denominate "a partial truce, under which hostilities are suspended only in certain places, as between a town and the army besieging it." It is possible that the President, under the laws of war, might have annulled this truce upon due notice to the opposite party; but neither General Scott nor any other person ever suggested this expedient. This would have been to cast a reflection on Major Anderson, who, beyond question, acted from the highest and purest motives. Did General Scott ever propose to violate this truce during its existence? If he did, I am not now, and never was, aware of the fact. Indeed, I think he would have been one of the last men in the world to propose such a measure.

Colonel Hayne did not deliver the letter which he bore from Governor Pickens, demanding the surrender of the fort, to the President until the 31st of January. The documents containing the reasons for this worrying delay were communicated to Congress in a special message of the 8th of February, to which I refer the reader. On the 5th of February the Secretary of War, under the instructions of the President, gave a peremptory refusal to this demand in an able and comprehensive letter, reviewing the whole subject, explaining and justifying the conduct of the President throughout. Its concluding sentence is both eloquent and emphatic:

If, (says Mr. Holt,) with all the multiplied proofs which exist of the President's anxiety for peace, and of the earnestness with which he has pursued it, the authorities of that State shall assault Fort Sumter and imperil

the lives of the handful of brave and loyal men shut up within its walls, and thus plunge our country into the horrors of civil war, then upon them and those they represent must rest the responsibility.

The truce was then ended, and General Scott is incorrect in stating "that it lasted to the end of that Administration."

An expedition was quietly fitted out at New York, under the supervision of General Scott, to be ready for any contingency. He arranged its details, and regarded the reinforcements thus provided for as sufficient. This was ready to sail for Fort Sumter on five hours' notice. It is of this expedition that General Scott thus speaks:

At that time, when this (the truce) had passed away, Secretaries Holt and Toucey, Captain Ward, of the Navy, and myself, with the knowledge of the President, settled upon the employment, under the Captain, of three or four steamers belonging to the Coast Survey, but he was kept back by the truce.

A strange inconsistency. The truce had expired with Mr. Holt's letter to Colonel Hayne on the 5th of February, and General Scott in his statement says, "It would have been easy to reinforce this fort down to about the 12th of February." Why then, did not the reinforcements proceed? This was simply because of communications from Major Anderson. It was most fortunate that they did not proceed; because the three or four small steamers which were to bear them would never have reached the fort, and in the attempt must have been captured or destroyed. The vast inadequacy of the force provided to accomplish the object was demonstrated by information received from Major Anderson at the War Department on the last day of the Administration.

I purposely forbear at present to say more on this subject, lest I might, however unintentionally, do injustice to one or more of the parties concerned, in consequence of the brevity required by the nature of this communication. The facts relating to it, with the appropriate accompaniments, have been fully presented in a historical review, prepared a year ago, which will ere long be published. This review contains a sketch of the four last months of my Administration. It is impartial; at least, such is my honest conviction. That it has not yet been published has arisen solely from an apprehension, no longer entertained, that



something therein might be unjustly perverted into an interference with the Government in a vigorous prosecution of the war for the maintenance of the Constitution and the restoration of the Union, which was far, very far, from my intention.

After a careful retrospect, I can solemnly declare before God and my country that I cannot reproach myself with any act of commission or omission since the existing troubles commenced. I have never doubted that my countrymen would yet do me justice. In my special message of the 8th of January, 1861, I presented a full and fair exposition of the alarming condition of the country, and urged Congress either to adopt measures of compromise, or, failing in this, to prepare for the last alternative. In both aspects my recommendation was disregarded. I shall close this document with a quotation of the last sentences of that message, as follows:

"In conclusion, it may be permitted me to remark that I have often warned my countrymen of the dangers which now surround us. This may be the last time I shall refer to the subject officially. I feel that my duty has been faithfully, though it may be imperfectly, performed; and whatever the result may be, I shall carry to my grave the consciousness that I at least meant well for my country."

Your obedient servant,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, October 28, 1862.

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Editorial Note.—The address of General Scott, to which the foregoing letter is an answer, was printed in the editorial columns of the *National Intelligencer* of October 21, 1862. It was prefaced by the following editorial comment:

LIEUTENANT GENERAL SCOTT'S OPINIONS.

Early in the last year, when civil war seemed impending but had not actually broken out, Gen. Scott, then at the head of the army, wrote two papers containing his views, professional and political, on the crisis, and the rights and duties which devolved on the Government in the momentous

conjuncture. These two papers were subsequently lent to many friends to read, and one of them has recently been published, without the writer's consent, evidently for a party purpose. As the illustrious Old Warrior professes to belong to no party other than that of the National Union, he has deemed it proper to give to the public himself the second of the papers referred to, lest it also might find its unauthorized way into print. He has, therefore, forwarded it to us for insertion in the *National Intelligencer*, having added to it a few explanatory "notes," which the lapse of time seemed to render proper.

The paper now submitted to the public by Gen. Scott throws a flood of light on the history of the rebellion in its incipient stages, and will inspire every reader with deep interest. It establishes, in the first place, the patriotic anxiety of the wise and watchful General-in-Chief to prepare for the coming storm and his earnest and repeated efforts to prevail on the Government to garrison and secure the Southern forts against every possible attack; and it discloses, in the second place, the causes of his failure, which, it is now evident, resulted from the indecision of the Executive, misled doubtless by treachery in the Secretary of War, if not in other members of the Cabinet, in whom the head of the Government reposed a misplaced and abused confidence. This paper, we may add, must have the effect, with every candid mind, of vindicating the character of the illustrious veteran General himself from imputations with which he has been recently assailed by presses whose standard of merit is regulated only by party tests.

[Then comes General Scott's publication, as follows:]

*Communicated to the Editors for Publication.*

SOUTHERN FORTS—A SUMMARY, &c.

October 30, 1860, I emphatically called the attention of the President to the necessity of strong garrisons in all the forts below the principal commercial cities of the Southern States, including, by name, the forts in Pensacola harbor. October 31 I suggested to the Secretary of War that a circular should be sent at once to such of those forts as had garrisons to be on the alert against surprises and sudden assaults.—(See my "Views," since printed.)

After a long confinement to my bed in New York, I came to this city (Washington) December 12. Next day I personally urged upon the Secretary of War the same views, viz.: strong garrisons in the Southern forts—those of Charleston and Pensacola harbors, at once; those on Mobile Bay and the Mississippi, below New Orleans, next, &c., &c. I again pointed out the organized companies and the recruits at the principal depots available for the purpose. The Secretary did not concur in any of my views, when I begged him to procure for me an early interview with the President, that I might make one effort more to save the forts and the Union.

By appointment the Secretary accompanied me to the President, December 15, when the same topics, secessionism, &c., were again pretty fully discussed. There being at the moment (in the opinion of the President) no danger of an early secession beyond South Carolina, the President, in reply to my arguments for immediately reinforcing Fort Moultrie and sending a garrison to Fort Sumter, said:

"The time has not arrived for doing so; that he should wait the action of the Convention of South Carolina in the expectation that a commission would be appointed and sent to negotiate with him and Congress respecting the secession of the State and the property of the United States held within its limits; and that if Congress should decide against the secession, then he would send a reinforcement, and telegraph the commanding officer (Major Anderson) of Fort Moultrie to hold the forts (Moultrie and Sumter) against attack."

And the Secretary, with animation, added:

"We have a vessel of war (the Brooklyn) held in readiness at Norfolk, and he would then send three hundred men in her from Fort Monroe to Charleston."

To which I replied, first, that so many men could not be withdrawn from that garrison, but could be taken from New York. Next, that it would then be too late, as the South Carolina Commissioners would have the game in their hands, by first using and then cutting the wires; that as there was not a soldier in Fort Sumter, any handful of armed secessionists might seize and occupy it, &c. &c.

Here the remark may be permitted, that if the Secretary's three hundred men had then, or some time later, been sent to Forts Moultrie and Sumter, *both* would now have been in the possession of the United States, and not a battery below them could have been erected by the secessionists; consequently the access to those forts from the sea would now (the end of March) be unobstructed and free.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "The plan invented by Gen. Scott to stop secession was, like all campaigns devised by him, very able in its details, and nearly certain of general success. The Southern States are full of arsenals and forts, commanding their rivers and strategic points. Gen. Scott desired to transfer the army of the United States to these forts as speedily and as quietly as possible. The Southern States could not cut off communication between the Government and the fortresses without a great fleet, which they cannot build for years, or take them by land without one hundred thousand men, many hundred millions of dollars, several campaigns, and many a bloody siege. Had Scott been able to have got these forts in the condition he desired them to be, the Southern Confederacy would not now exist."—*Part of the eulogy pronounced on Secretary Floyd (who defeated Scott's plan) by the Richmond Examiner, on Floyd's reception at that city.*

The same day, December 15, I wrote the following note:

"Lieut. Gen. Scott begs the President to pardon him for supplying, in this note, what he omitted to say this morning at the interview with which he was honored by the President.

"Long *prior* to the *force bill*, (March 2, 1833,) *prior* to the issue of his proclamation, and in part *prior* to the passage of the ordinance of nullification, President Jackson, under the act of March 3, 1807, 'authorizing the employment of the land and naval forces,' caused reinforcements to be sent to Fort Moultrie, and a sloop of war, (the Natchez,) with two revenue cutters, to be sent to Charleston harbor, in order, 1, to prevent the seizure of that fort by the nullifiers, and 2, to enforce the execution of the revenue laws. Gen. Scott himself arrived at Charleston the day after the passage of the ordinance of nullification, and many of the additional companies were then en route for the same destination.

"President Jackson familiarly said at the time 'that, by the assemblage of those forces, for lawful purposes, *he* was not making war upon South Carolina; but that if South Carolina attacked them, it would be South Carolina that made war upon the United States.'

"Gen. S., who received his first instructions (oral) from the President, in the temporary absence of the Secretary of War, (Gen. Cass,) remembers those expressions well.

"Saturday night, December 15, 1860."

December 28.—Again, after Major Anderson had gallantly and wisely thrown his handful of men from Fort Moultrie into Fort Sumter—learning that, on demand of South Carolina, there was great danger he might be ordered by the Secretary back to the less tenable work, or *out* of the harbor—I wrote this note:

"Lieut. Gen. Scott (who has had a bad night, and can scarcely hold up his head this morning) begs to express the hope to the Secretary of War—1. That orders may not be given for the evacuation of Fort Sumter. 2. That one hundred and fifty recruits may instantly be sent from Governor's Island to reinforce that garrison, with ample supplies of ammunition and subsistence, including fresh vegetables, as potatoes, onions, turnips; and 3. That one or two armed vessels be sent to support the said fort.

"Lieut. Gen. S. avails himself of this opportunity also to express the hope that the recommendations heretofore made by him to the Secretary of War respecting Forts Jackson, St. Philip, Morgan, and Pulaski, and particularly in respect to Forts Pickens and McRee and the Pensacola Navy Yard, in connection with the last two named works, may be reconsidered by the Secretary.

"Lieut. Gen. S. will further ask the attention of the Secretary to Forts Jefferson and Taylor, which are wholly *national*—being of far greater value even to the most distant points of the Atlantic coast and the people on the upper waters of the Missouri, Mississippi, and Ohio rivers than to the State of Florida. There is only a feeble company at Key West for the defence of

Fort Taylor, and not a soldier in Fort Jefferson to resist a handful of filibusters or a row-boat of pirates; and the Gulf, soon after the beginning of secession or revolutionary troubles in the adjacent States, will swarm with such nuisances.”<sup>1</sup>

December 30.—I addressed the President again, as follows:

“Lieutenant General Scott begs the President of the United States to pardon the irregularity of this communication. It is Sunday, the weather is bad, and General S. is not well enough to go to church.

“But matters of the highest national importance seem to forbid a moment’s delay, and, if misled by zeal, he hopes for the President’s forgiveness.

“Will the President permit General S., without reference to the War Department, and otherwise as secretly as possible, to send two hundred and fifty recruits from New York harbor to reinforce Fort Sumter, together with some extra muskets or rifles, ammunition, and subsistence?

“It is hoped that a sloop of war and cutter may be ordered for the same purpose as early as to-morrow.

“General S. will wait upon the President at any moment he may be called for.”

The South Carolina Commissioners had already been many days in Washington, and no movement of defence (on the part of the United States) was permitted.

I will here close my notice of Fort Sumter by quoting from some of my previous reports.

It would have been easy to reinforce this fort down to about the 12th of February. In this long delay Fort Moultrie had been re-armed and greatly strengthened in every way by the rebels. Many powerful new land batteries (beside a formidable raft) have been constructed. Hulks, too, have been sunk in the principal channel so as to render access to Fort Sumter from the sea impracticable without first carrying all the lower batteries of the secessionists. The difficulty of reinforcing has thus been increased ten or twelve fold. First, the late President refused to allow any attempt to be made because he was holding negotiations with the South Carolina Commissioners.

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<sup>1</sup> It was not till January 4 that, by the aid of Secretary Holt, (a strong and loyal man,) I obtained permission to send succor to the feeble garrison of Fort Taylor, Key West, and at the same time a company—Major Arnold’s, from Boston—to occupy Fort Jefferson, Tortugas Island. If this company had been three days later, the fort would have been preoccupied by Floridians. It is known that the rebels had their eyes upon these powerful forts, which govern the commerce of the Mexican Gulf, as Gibraltar and Malta govern that of the Mediterranean. With Forts Jefferson and Taylor, the rebels might have purchased an early European recognition. (*Note by General Scott.*)

Afterwards Secretary Holt and myself endeavored, in vain, to obtain a ship of war for the purpose, and were finally obliged to employ the passenger steamer "Star of the West." That vessel, but for the hesitation of the master, might, as is generally believed, have delivered at the fort the men and subsistence on board. This attempt at succor failing, I next, verbally, submitted to the late Cabinet either that succor be sent by ships of war, fighting their way by the batteries, (increasing in strength daily,) or that Major Anderson should be left to ameliorate his condition by the muzzles of his guns—that is, enforcing supplies by bombardment and by *bringing to* merchant vessels, helping himself, (giving orders for payment), or, finally, be allowed to evacuate the fort, which, in that case, would be inevitable.

But before any resolution was taken, the late Secretary of the Navy making difficulties about the want of suitable war vessels, another Commissioner from South Carolina arrived, causing further delay. When this had passed away, Secretaries Holt and Toucey, Captain Ward, of the Navy, and myself, with the knowledge of the President, (Buchanan,) settled upon the employment, under the Captain, (who was eager for the expedition,) of three or four small steamers belonging to the Coast Survey. At that time (late in January) I have but little doubt Captain Ward would have reached Fort Sumter with all his vessels. But he was kept back by something like a *truce* or armistice, (made here,) embracing Charleston and Pensacola harbors, agreed upon between the late President and certain principal seceders of South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana, &c., and this truce lasted to the end of that Administration.

That plan and all others, without a squadron of war ships and a considerable army—competent to take and hold the many formidable batteries below Fort Sumter, and before the exhaustion of its subsistence—having been pronounced, from the change of circumstances, impracticable, by Major Anderson, Captain Foster, (Chief Engineer,) and all the other officers of the fort, as well as by Brigadier General Totten, Chief of the Corps of Engineers, and, concurring in that opinion, I did not hesitate to advise (March 12th) that Major Anderson be instructed to evacuate the fort, so long gallantly held by him and his companions, immediately on procuring suitable transportation to take them to New York. His relative weakness had steadily increased in the last eighteen days.

It was not till January 3d (when the *first* Commissioners from South Carolina withdrew) that the permission I had solicited October 31st was obtained, to admonish commanders of the few Southern forts with garrisons to be on the alert against surprises and sudden assaults. (Major Anderson was not among the admonished, being already straitly beleaguered.)

January 3d. To Lieut. Slemmer, commanding in Pensacola Harbor:

"The General-in-Chief directs that you take measures to do the utmost in your power to prevent the seizure of either of the forts in Pensacola harbor by surprise or assault, consulting first with the commander of the navy yard, who will probably have received instructions to co-operate with you." (This order was signed by Aide-de-Camp Lay.)



It was just before the surrender of the Pensacola navy yard (January 12) that Lieut. Slemmer, calling upon Com. Armstrong, obtained the aid of some thirty common seamen or laborers, (but no marines,) which, added to his forty-six soldiers, made up his numbers to seventy-six men, with whom this meritorious officer has since held Fort Pickens, and performed, working night and day, an immense amount of labor in mounting guns, keeping up a strong guard, &c. &c.

Early in January I renewed, as has been seen, my solicitations to be allowed to reinforce Fort Pickens, but a good deal of time was lost in vacillations. First, the President "thought if no movement is made by the United States Fort McRee will probably not be occupied nor Fort Pickens attacked. In case of movements by the United States, which will doubtless be made known by the wires, there will be corresponding local movements, and the attempt to reinforce will be useless."—(*Quotation from a note made by Aide-de-Camp Lay, about January 12, of the President's reply to a message from me.*) Next, it was doubted whether it would be safe to send reinforcements in an unarmed steamer, and the want, *as usual*, of a suitable naval vessel—the Brooklyn being long held in reserve at Norfolk for some purpose unknown to me. Finally, after I had kept a body of three hundred recruits in New York harbor ready for some time—and they would have been sufficient to reinforce temporarily Fort Pickens and to occupy Fort McRee also—the President, about January 18, permitted that the sloop of war Brooklyn should take a single company, ninety men, from Fort Monroe, Hampton Roads, and reinforce Lieut. Slemmer, in Fort Pickens, but without a surplus man for the neighboring fort, McRee.

The Brooklyn, with Captain Vogdes's company alone left the Chesapeake for Fort Pickens about January 22d, and on the 29th President Buchanan, having entered into a *quasi* armistice with certain leading seceders at Pensacola and elsewhere, caused Secretaries Holt and Toucey to instruct, in a joint note, the commanders of the war vessels off Pensacola, and Lieut. Slemmer, commanding Fort Pickens, to commit no act of hostility, and not to land Captain Vogdes's company unless that fort should be attacked.<sup>1</sup>

[That joint note I never saw until March 25th, but supposed the armistice was consequent upon the meeting of the Peace Convention at Washington, and was understood to terminate with it.]

Hearing, however, of the most active preparations for hostilities on the part of the seceders at Pensacola, by the erection of new batteries and arming Fort McRee—that had not a gun mounted when it was seized—during the Peace Convention and since, I brought the subject to the notice of the new Administration, when this note, dated March 12th, to Capt. Vogdes was agreed

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<sup>1</sup> It was known at the Navy Department that the Brooklyn, with Capt. Vogdes on board, would be obliged in open sea to stand off and on Fort Pickens and in rough weather might sometimes be fifty miles off. Indeed, if ten miles at sea, the fort might have been attacked and easily carried before the reinforcement could have reached the beach, in open sea, where alone it could land. (*Note by General Scott.*)

upon, viz.: "At the first favorable moment you will land with your company, reinforce Fort Pickens, and hold the same till further orders." This order, in duplicate, left New York by two naval vessels about the middle of March, as the mail and the wires could not be trusted, and detached officers could not be substituted, for two had already been arrested and paroled by the authorities of Pensacola, despatches taken from one of them, and a third, to escape like treatment, forced to turn back when near that city. Thus those authorities have not ceased to make war upon the United States since the capture by them of the navy yard, January 12th.

Respectfully submitted.

WINFIELD SCOTT.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,  
WASHINGTON, March 30, 1861.

This paper of General Scott's is followed in the *Intelligencer* by an editorial paragraph to this effect:

"In giving the above paper, at the instance of Gen. Scott, it may not be improper to publish the following letter, referred to as the one which has appeared in print without his authority, and which, it is asserted in the public papers, the Secretary of State, to whom the letter was written, denies any instrumentality in making public."

Then comes the letter, to Mr. Seward, as follows:

WASHINGTON, March 3, 1861.

DEAR SIR: Hoping that in a day or two the new President will have happily passed through all personal dangers, and find himself installed an honored successor of the great Washington, with you as the chief of his Cabinet, I beg leave to repeat, in writing, what I have before said to you orally, this supplement to my printed "views" (dated in October last) on the highly disordered condition of our (so late) happy and glorious Union.

To meet the extraordinary exigencies of the times, it seems to me that I am guilty of no arrogance in limiting the President's field of selection to one of the four plans of procedure subjoined:

I. Throw off the old and assume a new designation—the Union party; adopt the conciliatory measures proposed by Mr. Crittenden or the Peace Convention, and, my life upon it, we shall have no new case of secession; but, on the contrary, an early return of many, if not of all the States which have already broken off from the Union. Without some equally benign measure, the remaining Slaveholding States will probably join the Montgomery Confederacy in less than sixty days; when this city, being included in a foreign country, would require a permanent garrison of at least thirty-five thousand troops to protect the Government within it.

II. Collect the duties on foreign goods outside the ports of which the Government has lost the command, or close such ports by act of Congress and blockade them.

III. Conquer the Seceded States by invading armies. No doubt this

might be done in two or three years by a young and able General—a Wolfe, a Desaix, a Hoche—with three hundred thousand disciplined men, estimating a third for garrisons, and the loss of a yet greater number by skirmishes, sieges, battles, and Southern fevers. The destruction of life and property, on the other side, would be frightful, however perfect the moral discipline of the invaders.

The conquest completed, at that enormous waste of human life to the North and Northwest, with at least \$250,000,000 added thereto, and *cui bono*? Fifteen devastated provinces! not to be brought into harmony with their conquerors, but to be held for generations by heavy garrisons, at an expense of quadruple the nett duties or taxes which it would be possible to extort from them, followed by a Protector or an Emperor.

IV. Say to the Seceded States, Wayward sisters, depart in peace.

In haste, I remain, very truly, yours,

WINFIELD SCOTT.

HON. WM. H. SEWARD, &c. &c.

In publishing Mr. Buchanan's answer to General Scott in the issue of November 1, 1862, the editors of the *National Intelligencer* made the following comment:

"In making this statement [as to indecision of the Executive, etc.], it is hardly necessary for us to say that we intended no reflection whatever on either the intelligence or the patriotic purpose of the Ex-President, who, in a most difficult conjuncture, was called to consult for the public safety according to the means at his disposal and with the lights before him. . . . In the paper now placed before our readers, the venerable Ex-President shows that he was not unmindful of the obligations placed upon him by the trying events through which he was called to pass in the closing months of his administration, and he clearly states the considerations of public duty under which he acted, as also the limits within which he had power to act at all. At the same time he places in a clear light some facts which, from the commanding position he then held at the head of affairs, he is able to present in a collocation that redeems his conduct from certain misapprehensions which may have been entertained at the time by observers less cognizant of all the circumstances which made up 'the situation,' as well civil as military, at the outbreak of secession."

General Scott's "Views," of October 29 and 30, 1860, referred to in Mr. Buchanan's answer, were published by General Scott's authority in the *National Intelligencer* of January 18, 1861, as follows:

VIEWS SUGGESTED BY THE IMMINENT DANGER (OCTOBER 29, 1860) OF A DISRUPTION OF THE UNION BY THE SECESSION OF ONE OR MORE OF THE SOUTHERN STATES.

To save time, the right of secession may be conceded, and instantly balanced by the correlative right, on the part of the Federal Government, against an *interior* State or States, to re-establish by force, if necessary, its former

continuity of territory.—(*Paley's Moral and Political Philosophy, last chapter.*)

But break this glorious Union by whatever line or lines that political madness may contrive, and there would be no hope of reuniting the fragments except by the laceration and despotism of the sword. To effect such result the intestine wars of our Mexican neighbors would, in comparison with ours, sink into mere child's play.

A smaller evil would be to allow the fragments of the great Republic to form themselves into new Confederacies, probably four.

All the lines of demarcation between the new Unions cannot be accurately drawn in advance but many of them approximately may. Thus, looking to natural boundaries and commercial affinities, some of the following frontiers, after many waverings and conflicts, might perhaps become acknowledged and fixed:

1. The Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay to the Atlantic. 2. From Maryland along the crest of the Alleghany (perhaps the Blue Ridge) range of mountains to some point on the coast of Florida. 3. The line from say the head of the Potomac to the west or northwest, which it will be most difficult to settle. 4. The crest of the Rocky Mountains.

The Southeast Confederacy would, in all human probability, in less than five years after the rupture, find itself bounded by the first and second lines indicated above, the Atlantic, and the Gulf of Mexico, with its capital at say Columbia, South Carolina. The country between the second, third, and fourth of those lines would, beyond a doubt, in about the same time, constitute another Confederacy, with its capital at probably Alton or Quincy, Illinois. The boundaries of the Pacific Union are the most definite of all, and the remaining States would constitute the Northeast Confederacy, with its capital at Albany.

It, at the first thought, will be considered strange that seven Slaveholding States and parts of Virginia and Florida should be placed (above) in a new Confederacy with Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, etc. But when the overwhelming weight of the great Northwest is taken in connection with the laws of trade, contiguity of territory, and the comparative indifference to free soil doctrines on the part of Western Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri, it is evident that but little if any coercion, beyond moral force, would be needed to embrace them; and I have omitted the temptation of the unwasted public lands which would fall entire to this Confederacy—an apanage (well husbanded) sufficient for many generations. As to Missouri, Arkansas, and Mississippi, they would not stand out a month. Louisiana would coalesce without much solicitation, and Alabama, with West Florida, would be conquered the first winter from the absolute need of Pensacola for a naval depot.

If I might presume to address the South, and particularly dear Virginia—being “native here and to the manner born”—I would affectionately ask, Will not your slaves be less secure and their labors less profitable under the new order of things than under the old? Could you employ profitably two hundred slaves in all Nebraska, or five hundred in all New Mexico? The right, then, to take them thither would be a barren right. And is it not wise to

"Rather bear the ills we have  
Than fly to others that we know not of?"

The Declaration of Independence proclaims and consecrates the same maxim: "Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes." And Paley, too, lays down as a fundamental maxim of statesmanship, "never to pursue national *honor* as distinct from national *interest*;" but adds: "This rule acknowledges that it is often necessary to assert the honor of a nation for the sake of its interests."

The excitement that threatens secession is caused by the near prospect of a Republican's election to the Presidency. From a sense of propriety, as a soldier, I have taken no part in the pending canvass, and, as always heretofore, mean to stay away from the polls. My sympathies, however, are with the Bell and Everett ticket. With Mr. Lincoln I have had no communication whatever, direct or indirect, and have no recollection of ever having seen his person; but cannot believe any unconstitutional violence, or breach of law, is to be apprehended from his administration of the Federal Government.

From a knowledge of our Southern population, it is my solemn conviction that there is some danger of an early act of rashness preliminary to secession, viz., the seizure of some or all of the following posts: Forts Jackson and St. Philip, in the Mississippi, below New Orleans, both without garrisons; Fort Morgan, below Mobile, without a garrison; Forts Pickens and McRee, Pensacola harbor, with an insufficient garrison for one; Fort Pulaski, below Savannah, without a garrison; Forts Moultrie and Sumter, Charleston harbor, the former with an insufficient garrison, and the latter without any; and Fort Monroe, Hampton Roads, without a sufficient garrison. In my opinion all these works should be immediately so garrisoned as to make any attempt to take any one of them, by surprise or *coup de main*, ridiculous.

With the army faithful to its allegiance, and the navy probably equally so, and with a Federal Executive, for the next twelve months, of firmness and moderation, which the country has a right to expect—*moderation* being an element of power not less than *firmness*—there is good reason to hope that the danger of secession may be made to pass away without one conflict of arms, one execution, or one arrest for treason.

In the mean time it is suggested that exports should remain as free as at present; all duties, however, on imports, collected, (outside of the cities,<sup>1</sup>) as such receipts would be needed for the national debt, invalid pensions, &c., and only articles contraband of war be refused admittance. But even this refusal would be unnecessary, as the foregoing views eschew the idea of invading a seceded State.

WINFIELD SCOTT.

October 29, 1860.

<sup>1</sup> In forts or on board ships of war. The great aim and object of this plan was to gain time—say eight or ten months—to await expected measures of conciliation on the part of the North, and the subsidence of angry feelings in the opposite quarter. (*Note by General Scott.*)

Lieut. General Scott's respects to the Secretary of War to say—

That a copy of his "Views, &c." was despatched to the President yesterday, in great haste; but the copy intended for the Secretary, better transcribed, (herewith,) was not in time for the mail. General S. would be happy if the latter could be substituted for the former.

It will be seen that the "Views" only apply to a case of secession that makes a *gap* in the present Union. The falling off (say) of Texas, or of all the Atlantic States, from the Potomac south, was not within the scope of General S.'s provisional remedies.

It is his opinion that instructions should be given, at once, to the commanders of the Barancas, Forts Moultrie and Monroe, to be on their guard against surprises and *coups de main*. As to *regular approaches*, nothing can be said or done, at this time, without volunteers.

There is one (regular) company at Boston, one here, (at the Narrows,) one at Pittsburg, one at Augusta, Ga., and one at Baton Rouge—in all, five companies only, within reach, to garrison or reinforce the forts mentioned in the "Views."

General Scott is all solicitude for the safety of the Union. He is, however, not without hope that all dangers and difficulties will pass away without leaving a scar or painful recollection behind.

The Secretary's most obedient servant,

W. S.

October 30, 1860.

To Mr. Buchanan's "Answer," General Scott published in the *National Intelligencer* of November 12, 1862, the following "Rejoinder:"

#### REJOINDER OF LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SCOTT TO EX-PRESIDENT BUCHANAN.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER:

I regret to find myself in a controversy with the venerable ex-President Buchanan.

Recently (October 21) you published my official *report* to President Lincoln, dated March 30, 1861, giving a summary of my then recent connection with our principal Southern forts, which, I am sorry to perceive, has given offence to the ex-President. That result, purely incidental, did not enter into my purpose in drawing up the paper; but, on reflection, I suppose that under the circumstances offence was unavoidable.

Let it be remembered that the new President had a right to demand of me—the immediate commander of the army—how it had happened that the incipient rebels had been allowed to seize several of those forts, and from the bad condition of others were likely to gain possession of them also. Primarily the blame rested exclusively on me. Hence, to vindicate my sworn allegiance to the Union, and professional conduct, the report was submitted to President Lincoln at an early day, (in his administration,) and recently to the world.

To that short paper ex-President Buchanan publishes a reply of double the length in the *Intelligencer* of the 1st instant. My rejoinder, from neces-



sity, if not taste, will be short, for I hold the pen in a rheumatic hand, and am without aide-de-camp or amanuensis, and without a printed document and my own official papers.

Unable, in my present condition, to make an analysis of the ex-President's long reply, I avail myself of a substitute furnished by an accidental visitor, who has kindly marked the few points which he thinks may require some slight notice at my hands.

1. To account for not having garrisoned sufficiently the Southern forts named against anticipated treason and rebellion, according to my many recommendations, beginning October 29, 1860, repeated the next day, and again, more earnestly, December 13, 15, 28, and 30, the ex-President says: "There were no available troops within reach."

Now, although it is true that, with or without the ex-President's approbation, the Secretary of War had nearly denuded our whole Eastern seaboard of troops in order to augment our forces in Texas and Utah, I nevertheless pointed out, at several of the above dates, the six hundred recruits (about) which we had in the harbor of New York and at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, nearly all organized into temporary companies, and tolerably drilled and disciplined—quite equal to the purpose in question—besides the five companies of regulars near at hand, making about one thousand men. These disposable troops would have given (say) two hundred men to the twin forts Jackson and St. Philip below New Orleans; an equal number to Fort Morgan, below Mobile; a reinforcement of one hundred men to Fort Pickens, Pensacola harbor, and a garrison of the like number to the twin fort, McRee; a garrison of one hundred men to Fort Jefferson, Tortugas Island, and the same to Fort Pulaski, below Savannah, which, like Forts Jackson, St. Philip, Morgan, and McRee, had not at the time a soldier—leaving about two hundred men for the twin forts Moultrie and Sumter, Charleston harbor, where there were two weak companies, making less than ninety men. Fortress Monroe had already a garrison of some eight companies, one or two of which might, in the earlier period of danger, have been spared till volunteers could have been obtained, notwithstanding printed handbills were everywhere posted in Eastern Virginia by an eccentric character, inviting recruits to take that most important work.

Now, I have nowhere said that either of those forts, even with the reinforcement indicated, would have had a *war* garrison. Certainly not. My proposition was to put each in a condition, as I expressly said, to guard against a surprise or *coup de main*, (an off-hand attack, one without full preparation.)

That these movements of small detachments might easily have been made in November and December, 1860, and some of them as late as the following month, cannot be doubted. But the ex-President sneers at my "weak device" for saving the forts. He forgets what the gallant Anderson did, with a handful of men, in Fort Sumter, and leaves out of the account what he might have done with a like handful in Fort Moultrie, even without further augmentation of men to divide between the garrisons. Twin forts, on the opposite sides of a channel, not only give a cross fire on the head of an attack, but the strength of each is more than doubled by the flanking fire

of the other. The same remarks apply to the gallant Lieut. Slemmer, with his handful of brave men, in Fort Pickens. With what contempt might he not have looked upon Chase or Bragg, in front of him, with varying masses of from two thousand to six thousand men, if Fort Pickens and its twin fort, McRee, had had between them only two hundred men!

I have thus shown that small garrisons would at first have sufficed for the other twins, Forts Jackson and St. Philip, also. My object was to save to the Union, by any means at hand, all those works until Congress could have time to authorize a call for volunteers—a call which the President, for such purpose, might no doubt have made, without any special legislation, with the full approbation of every loyal man in the Union.

2. The ex-President almost loses his amiability in having his neglect of the forts “attributed,” as he says, “without the least cause, to the influence of Gov. Floyd;” and he adds, “all my Cabinet must bear me witness that I was the President myself, responsible for all the acts of the Administration.”

Now, notwithstanding this broad assumption of responsibility, I should be sorry to believe that Mr. Buchanan specially consented to the removal, by Secretary Floyd, of 115,000 extra muskets and rifles, with all their implements and ammunition, from Northern repositories to Southern arsenals, so that on the breaking out of the maturing rebellion they might be found without cost, except to the United States, in the most convenient positions for distribution among the insurgents. So, too, of the one hundred and twenty or one hundred and forty pieces of heavy artillery which the same Secretary ordered from Pittsburg to Ship Island, in Lake Borgne, and Galveston, Texas, for forts not yet erected! Accidentally learning, early in March, that, under this *posthumous* order, the shipment of these guns had commenced, I communicated the fact to Secretary Holt (acting for Secretary Cameron) just in time to defeat the robbery.

But on this point we may hear ex-Secretary Floyd himself. At Richmond he expressly claimed the honor of defeating all my plans and solicitations respecting the forts, and received his reward—it being there universally admitted that but for that victory over me there could have been no rebellion!

3. Mr. Buchanan complains that I published, without permission, January 18, 1861, my views, addressed to him and the Secretary of War, October 29 and 30, 1860. But that act was caused, as I explained to him at the time, by the misrepresentations of the *views* in one of the earlier speeches of the same ex-Secretary after his return to Virginia.

4. One of my statements complaining of the joint countermand, sent through the Secretaries of War and Navy, to prevent the landing at Fort Pickens of Capt. Vogdes’s company, *unless the fort should be attacked*, is cited by the ex-President to prove a “singular want of memory” on my part; and a note from Secretary Holt is adduced to show that I had entirely approved of the joint countermand the day (January 29) that it was prepared. Few persons are as little liable to make a misstatement by accident as Mr. Holt, and no one more incapable of making one by design; yet I have not the slightest recollection of any interview with him on this subject. I do remember, however, that Mr. Holt, on some matter of business, approached

my bedside about that time when I was suffering greatly from an access of pain. Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Holt, and myself were all landsmen, and could know but little of the impossibility of landing troops on an open sea beach, with a high wind and surf. Mr. Toucey, Secretary of the Navy, with officers about him of intelligence and nautical experience, ought to have said plumply that if Vogdes was not to land except in the case of attack upon Fort Pickens he might as well have remained at Fortress Monroe, as the prohibition placed the fort, so far as he was concerned, at the mercy or (as the event showed) on the want of enterprise on the part of the rebel commander at Pensacola.

Possibly there are other parts of the reply which a superficial reader may think require comment or elucidation; and, indeed, here is another marked for me by my kind visitor.

5. The ex-President has brought together a labyrinth of dates respecting the arrival and departure of rebel commissioners, armistices, &c., with which, as I had no official connection, I may have made an unimportant mistake or two; but as I have not by me the means of recovering the clew to those windings, I shall not attempt to follow him.

WINFIELD SCOTT.

NEW YORK, 5TH AVE. HOTEL, Nov. 8, 1862.

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TO MR. BENNETT.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,  
29th October 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have this moment received your letter of the 25th Instant, informing me that a number of ladies & gentlemen of Cincinnati had formed themselves into a Reading Club, & had honored me by adopting a Resolution calling it after my name. I need not say how much this token of their regard has touched the heart of an old public servant in retirement. It shall be gratefully remembered.

The association, conducted with wise & persevering effort, cannot fail to prove highly useful both to its own members & to society. The solitary reading of an individual for mere pastime is of comparatively little value either to himself or to others.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 596.

The information thus acquired soon passes away & is forgotten, unless fixed upon the memory & impressed upon the heart by an interchange of opinions with congenial spirits. The participation of ladies in the duties of the association is calculated to exercise the most happy influence. It will promote refinement, religion, & morality among its members.

May the "Buchanan Reading Club" flourish & produce good fruit long after he whose name it bears shall have been gathered to his fathers!

Yours very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

CHARLES EDWARD BENNETT, ESQUIRE.

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TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 7 Nov: 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 29 ultimo. You have, no doubt, frequent occasions to defend me, and I am truly grateful that you embrace them with the ardor of friendship. None doubt your ability.

When the troubles were approaching, I determined prayerfully upon my course, from which I never departed. This was done after much reflection; & had my earnest advice & recommendations been followed, we should have had no war. It is now alleged if I had plunged into hostilities with four or five hundred men, at an early period, this would have terrified the South into submission.

General Scott's attack upon me was most unexpected and causeless. Perhaps it may prove all for the best.

I owe you many thanks for the copy of "Plain Facts," &c., & I should feel much indebted to you for half a dozen more

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 596.

copies. I have looked over it with great interest. It has revived many agreeable memories.

I congratulate you on having become a Grandfather, & trust that the boy may prove an honor to yourself & a distinguished & useful citizen of his country.

I do not intend to remove from this place. I simply joined a friend in purchasing a farm in Chester County because at the moment he was unable to pay for the whole of it. He desired it for a residence, & as soon as he is able to pay for my half I shall convey it to him.

I am truly rejoiced to learn that the Government is doing you a simple act of justice.

My health, thank God! continues good for a man of my age.

Miss Lane desires to be kindly remembered to you.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

## TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,  
17 November 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I am under additional obligations to you for your kind letter of the 14th Instant. I now send you my answer to General Scott's Rejoinder, with the request that you may deliver it to our friend Col: Seaton for publication. You may say to the Colonel that I probably should not have replied but for the introduction of the "stolen arms" question, which I could not pass over in silence. It is difficult to have a controversy with a gentleman who has so defective a memory or writes so much at haphazard.

In looking over my reply, you will find on the 5th page a sentence commencing as follows, which you will understand:—

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

"I have never been able to obtain a copy of the speech of Mr. Floyd at Richmond," &c. &c.

At the time I heard from Mr. Carlisle & others & now learn from you that he (Floyd) had denounced me bitterly in that speech in the manner stated. If this be the fact, let the sentence be retained, because important; but if not, please to strike it out before you deliver the paper to the *Intelligencer*. I would thank you to send me 50 copies, by Adams' Express, of the *Intelligencer* which contains it, & I shall immediately transmit you the cost.

Please to acknowledge the receipt of this in a single line when it comes to hand, or in a much longer letter if you have the time.

Remember me, in the kindest terms, to Col: Seaton, Mr. Carlisle, & Dr. Jones.

Miss Lane desires to be most kindly remembered to you.

From your friend as ever

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

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## ANSWER TO GENERAL SCOTT'S "REJOINDER."<sup>1</sup>

[November 17, 1862.]

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER:

With a few remarks I shall close the controversy with Gen. Scott, into which I have been most reluctantly forced by his voluntary and unexpected attack. This has, nevertheless, afforded me an opportunity of correcting many unfounded reports which I had long borne in patience and in silence. In my answer, I have already furnished clear and distinct responses to all the allegations of Gen. Scott; and in his rejoinder he has not called in question any of my statements, with a single exception. Which of us is correct in this particular depends upon the question whether his recollection of an event which occurred more than

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<sup>1</sup> *National Intelligencer*, Nov. 25, 1862.



eighteen months ago, or the statement of Mr. Holt, reduced to writing on the very day, is entitled to the greater credit.

The General, in the introduction of his rejoinder, assigns as an excuse for the criticism on my public conduct that this was merely incidental to his alleged official report to President Lincoln on the condition of our fortifications, and was not primarily intended for myself. From this statement one would conclude that he had made such a report. But where is this to be found? For it he refers to the *Intelligencer* of the 21st October; but there I discover nothing but his letter of four points to Mr. Seward, dated on the 3d March, 1861, advising the incoming President how to guide his administration in face of the threatened dangers to the country. In the single introductory sentence to this letter, he barely refers to his "printed views," (dated in October, 1860,) which had been long before the public; but it contains nothing like an official report on the condition of the fortifications.

Whether the introduction of this letter to the public without the consent of President Lincoln, by one of the General's friends, in a political speech during a highly excited gubernatorial canvass, had influenced him to prepare his criticism on my conduct, it is not for me to determine.

At what period did Gen. Scott obtain the six hundred recruits to which he refers in his rejoinder? This was certainly after the date of his "views," on the 30th October, 1860; because in these he states emphatically that the forces then at his command were, "in all, five companies only within reach to garrison or reinforce the [nine] forts mentioned in the views."

Did he obtain these recruits in November? If so, had he visited Washington or written and explained to me in what manner this military operation could be accomplished by the four hundred men in the five companies and the six hundred recruits, I should have given his representations all the consideration eminently due to his high military reputation.

But he informs us that he did not arrive in Washington until the 12th of December. His second recommendation to garrison these forts must consequently have been made, according to his own statement, on the 13th, 15th, 28th, or 30th of December, or on more than one of these days. At this period the aspect of public affairs had greatly changed from what it was in

October. Congress was now in session, and our relations with the Seceding Cotton States had been placed before them by the President's message. Proceedings had been instituted by that body with a view to a compromise of the dangerous questions between the North and the South; and the highest hopes and warmest aspirations were then entertained for their success. Under these circumstances it was the President's duty to take a broad view of the condition of the whole country, in all its relations, civil, industrial, and commercial, as well as military, giving to each its appropriate influence. It was only from such a combination that he could frame a policy calculated to preserve the peace and to consolidate the strength of the Union. Isolated recommendations proceeding from one department, without weighing well their effect upon the general policy, ought to be adopted with extreme caution.

But it seems from the rejoinder that Secretary Floyd, at Richmond, had claimed the honor of defeating Gen. Scott's "plans and solicitations respecting the forts," "it being there," says the General, "universally admitted that but for that victory over me there could have been no rebellion." This is, in plain English, that the secessionists of the Cotton States, who have since brought into the field hundreds of thousands of undoubtedly brave soldiers, would have abandoned in terror their unlawful and rebellious designs, had Gen. Scott distributed among their numerous forts four hundred and eighty men in October or one thousand men in December! This requires no comment. I have never been able to obtain a copy of the speech of Mr. Floyd at Richmond, to which I presume Gen. Scott refers; but I learned, both at the time and since, from gentlemen of high respectability, that in this same speech he denounced me most bitterly for my determination to stand by and sustain the Union with all the power I possessed under the Constitution and the laws.

And here permit me to remark that it is due to Gen. Scott as well as myself to deny that there is any portion of my answer which justifies the allegation that "the ex-President sneers at my '*weak device*' (the words '*weak device*' being marked as a quotation) for saving the forts." This mistake I must attribute to his "accidental visitor."

And in this connection I emphatically declare that the General, neither before nor after the publication of his "views" in

the National Intelligencer of the 18th January, 1861, without my consent, assigned any reason to me for making this publication, or ever even alluded to the subject. In this I cannot be mistaken, from the deep impression which the occurrence made upon my memory, for the reasons already mentioned in my answer.

I should have nothing more to add had Gen. Scott, in his rejoinder, confined himself to the topics embraced in the original letter. He has extended them, and now for the first time, and in a sarcastic and no kindly spirit, refers to the alleged stealing of public arms by Secretary Floyd and their transportation to the South in anticipation of the rebellion. The most conclusive answer to this allegation is that notwithstanding the boasting of Mr. Floyd at Richmond, evidently with the view of conciliating his new allies, cited by the General as his authority, no public arms were ever stolen. This fact is established by the report of the Committee on Military Affairs of the House of Representatives, now before me, made by Mr. Stanton, of Ohio, their chairman, on the 18th February, 1861, and to be found in the second volume of the Reports of Committees of the House for the session of 1860-61. This report and the testimony before the committee establish:

1. That the Southern States received in 1860 less instead of more than the quota of arms to which they were entitled by law; and that three of them—North Carolina, Mississippi, and Kentucky—received no arms whatever, and this simply because they did not ask for them. Well may Mr. Stanton have said in the House "that there are a good deal of rumors and speculations and misapprehensions as to the true state of facts in regard to this matter."

2. Secretary Floyd, under suspicious circumstances, on the 22d December, 1860, and but a few days before he left the Department, had, without the knowledge of the President, ordered one hundred and thirteen (113) columbiads and eleven (11) thirty-two pounders to be transported from Pittsburg to Ship Island and Galveston, in Mississippi and Texas. This fact was brought to the knowledge of the President by a communication from Pittsburg; and Secretary Holt immediately thereafter countermanded the order of his predecessor, and the cannon were never sent. The promptitude with which we acted elicited

a vote of thanks, dated on the 4th of January, 1861, from the Select and Common Councils of that city "to the President, the Attorney General, and the acting Secretary of War," (Mr. Holt.)

After this statement, how shall we account for the explicit declaration of Gen. Scott that, "accidentally hearing early in March that under this posthumous order (that of Mr. Floyd of the 22d December) the shipment of these guns had commenced, I communicated the fact to Secretary Holt, (acting for Secretary Cameron,) just in time to defeat the robbery"? And this is the same Secretary Holt who had countermanded "the posthumous order" in the previous December! And, strange to say, these guns, but for the alleged interposition of Gen. Scott, were about to be sent so late as March from the Loyal States into those over which Jefferson Davis had then for some time presided!

Had Gen. Scott reflected for a moment, he could not have fallen into this blunder. It is quite manifest he was "without a printed document and my (his) own official papers."

3. The Government had on hand in the year 1859 about 500,000 old muskets, which had been condemned "as unsuitable for public service," under the act of 3d March, 1825. They were of such a character that, although offered both at public and private sale for \$2.50 each, purchasers could not be obtained at that rate, except for a comparatively small number. On the 30th of November, 1859, Secretary Floyd ordered about one-fifth of the whole number (105,000) to be sent from the Springfield armory, where they had accumulated, to five Southern arsenals, "in proportion to their respective means of proper storage." This order was carried into effect by the Ordnance Bureau in the usual course of administration, and without reference to the President. It is but justice to say that from the testimony before the committee there is no reason to suspect that Secretary Floyd issued this order from any sinister motive. Its date was months before Mr. Lincoln's nomination for the Presidency, and nearly a year before his election, and whilst the Secretary was still an avowed opponent of secession. Indeed, the testimony of Colonel Craig and Captain Maynadier, of the Ordnance, before the committee, is wholly inconsistent with any evil intention on his part.

And yet these "condemned muskets," with a few thousand ancient rifles of a calibre then no longer used, are transformed by Gen. Scott into "115,000 *extra muskets and rifles, with all their implements and ammunition.*" This is the first time I have heard—certainly there was nothing of the kind before the committee—that ammunition was sent with these condemned and inferior arms to their places of storage—just as though they had been intended, not for sale, but for immediate use in the field. The truth is, that it is impossible to steal arms and transport them from one depository to another without the knowledge and active participation of the officers of the Ordnance Bureau, both in Washington and at these depositories. It may be observed that Colonel Craig, the head of the Bureau at this period, was as correct an officer and as loyal and as honest a man as exists in the country.

Yours, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, November 17, 1862.

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To the foregoing letter of Mr. Buchanan, General Scott published in the *National Intelligencer* of December 5, 1862, the following reply:

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER:

An official report of mine made to President Lincoln, March 30, 1861, on our Southern forts, was published on the 21st of October last. To this ex-President Buchanan replied at great length, in the same month. A short rejoinder from me followed early in November, and here is another paper from Mr. Buchanan, dated the 17th of the same month, and on the same subject. A brief notice of this paper shall terminate my part in this controversy.

Mr. Buchanan has intimated that I have been actuated by a feeling of personal ill-will towards him. This is unjust. I had no private resentment to gratify. On the contrary, I have well remembered the many official courtesies received from him, as well as from Mr. Floyd, both as Governor of Virginia and Secretary of War; but to vindicate justice and the truth of history is a paramount obligation.

I had said that, with a view to the meditated rebellion, Secretary Floyd had ordered 115,000 extra<sup>1</sup> stands of muskets and rifles from Northern

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<sup>1</sup>Over and above the previous and usual deposits in the Southern arsenals.  
(*Note by General Scott.*)

depositories to Southern arsenals. To this Mr. B. now replies in substance—  
 1. That the transfers were made under an order dated nearly a year before Mr. Lincoln's election to the Presidency. True; but if Mr. B. has persuaded himself that the revolt had not long before been planned, (dependent on the election of *any* Northern man,) it is not likely that he will ever make a second convert to that opinion. 2. He only gives 105,000 as the number of arms transferred, omitting the 10,000 rifles. 3. He says that the muskets (105,000) were condemned, and that purchasers could not be found for many of them at \$2.50 each. Now, here is an official statement, made to me eighteen months ago, (just received from my papers at Washington,) showing that 65,000 of those arms were "percussion muskets," probably entirely new, and 40,000 others, termed "muskets altered to percussion," with 10,000 "percussion rifles"—not one of the 115,000 was ever "condemned," but all precisely like most of the small arms issued to our troops (regular and volunteer) in 1861. 4. Mr. Buchanan further intimates that those arms were transferred to equalize, in some degree, the deposits among the different States, as if these had any State pride in allowing *storage* to the property of the United States within their particular limits. If so, why not establish storage places in the great States of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, within which the United States has had no deposit of arms and no arsenal? 5. Mr. B. supposes me to brand the transferred arms with the epithet "stolen." In my rejoinder to him I nowhere used that term, because I knew the transaction, though very quietly conducted, was officially recorded, and the freight paid for by the United States, whose property the arms continued to be in their new depositories.

Mr. Buchanan mixes up—perhaps I ought rather to say *seems to confound*—quite a different class of arms with the foregoing, viz., the quotas of arms distributed among the several States under the annual appropriations towards arming the whole body of the militia of the Union. Thus he says: "The Southern States received in 1860 less instead of more than the quotas of arms to which they were entitled by law." This is most strange, contrasted with information given to me last year, and a telegram just received from Washington and a high officer—not of the Ordnance Bureau—in these words and figures:

"Rhode Island, Delaware, and Texas had not drawn at the end of eighteen sixty (1860) their annual quotas of arms for that year, and Massachusetts, Tennessee, and Kentucky only in part; Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Kansas were, by the order of the Secretary of War, supplied with their quotas for eighteen sixty-one (1861) in advance, and Pennsylvania and Maryland in part."

This *advance* of arms to eight Southern States is a sufficient commentary by itself on the transfer, about the same time, of the 115,000 muskets and rifles.

In respect to the heavy cannon ordered from Pittsburg to the Gulf of Mexico, Mr. Buchanan has shown me that I was in error in saying that their shipment was countermanded in March instead of January, 1861. This



was the only immaterial part of my statement; for I was correct in the declaration that I gave information to Mr. Secretary Holt that the shipment had commenced, and that he ordered the guns to be relanded, and stopped the robbery.<sup>1</sup>

WINFIELD SCOTT.

NEW YORK, December 2, 1862.

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TO MR. HENRY.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND 22 November 1862.

MY DEAR JAMES/

I have received your favor of the 19th Instant, & am happy to learn that my manuscript is safe in Mr. Schell's hands. You suggest that it might be proper to extend it so as to embrace the history of my whole administration. I fear I am not able to undertake the task. Besides, this would require my presence in Washington, or that of some trusty person to collect and arrange the Documents. Judge Black at an early period offered to undertake the work, but has some time since abandoned it.

Things move on as usual at Wheatland. Judging from the number of letters & papers I receive, I infer that my letter to General Scott has been well received by the Public.

I expected ere this to have seen in the *Intelligencer* a short reply which I made to General Scott's last. I probably should have made no reply, but for his introduction of the "stolen arms."

Yours affectionately

JAMES BUCHANAN.

J. BUCHANAN HENRY, ESQ.

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<sup>1</sup> For Mr. Buchanan's reply to these statements of General Scott, see his letter of Dec. 11, 1862, *infra*, to the *National Intelligencer*.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Partly printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 598.

TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 27 November 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your letters of the 24th & 25th Instant; & am placed under additional obligations. I am already so much in debt to you & have so little means of payment, that I shall have to take the benefit of the Insolvent law. I am also greatly obliged to my old & valued friend Col: Seaton for his fairness & kindness. The cause of the delay is curious; & was entirely beyond your control.

I should be sorry if General Scott would pursue the controversy further. I do not charge him with intentional misrepresentation, for of this I believe him to be incapable; but his memory is more impaired than even I had believed. He has got a great many things jumbled together, & does not seem to have any distinct ideas of what has passed since he came to Washington in December, 1860. I was rejoiced when he left the command of the army, though things do not seem to have much improved since.

I do not see Forney's Press; but I understand that he is on a new tack of downright falsehood. He announces that political assemblies have been held at Wheatland, & even mentions the names of gentlemen present, without the shadow of foundation. Judge Black & Wm. B. Reed are always two of the *Dramatis personæ*. It is months since I have seen either, though I often hear from the latter, though not from the former.

I have taken no part in party Politics since my return from Washington, further than to express my opinions on current events to a few personal friends & to give my vote. They—the Forneyites—have now got me up for Senator, when they well know that there is no office which I should think for a moment of accepting.

I am in my usual health. Miss Lane is not at home this evening, or she would send her kindest regards.

I send you the \$2.00 which you paid for the Intelligencers.

Ever your friend

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Printed, with omissions, in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 598.

TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, December 6, 1862.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I have received your favor of the 30th ultimo, and am gratified that you think so well of my letters to General Scott. That the editor of the Boston *Post* should not have published them, is to me a matter of astonishment, little reason as I have to be astonished at any event. Throughout New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and the great West, they have been extensively republished and, I think, have done much good. New England, however, except Connecticut, is a sealed book. General Scott has, I believe, made a final reply, but it has not yet reached me. This I shall not answer, unless it contains something imperatively requiring it. I have but few copies, and I cannot supply the demand. I send you one of each.

I fear that your History of Democracy, of which I think highly, is so far behind that it will require years for you to overtake the present time. This period would furnish you ample illustrations of the conservative wisdom of its principles.

You ask me what I think of Messrs. Holt, Stanton, and Dickinson. I cannot answer this question without going too much into detail.

Miss Lane desires to be very kindly remembered to you. Should you visit Washington, we should be most happy to see you, either on your way or your return.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

P. S. Please to pardon me for having inadvertently written on two sheets.

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 599.

TO MR. TOUCEY.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

6 December 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

Yours of the 19th ultimo afforded me sincere pleasure. I had written to you several months ago, & from the fact it was never acknowledged I inferred it had never been received. I should be glad to know whether I was correct.

My answers to General Scott have been well received throughout Pennsylvania, New Jersey, & the Western States, & have, I think, produced a good effect. Not so in New York & New England, with the exception of Connecticut. I am informed they were not published in Greene's Boston Morning Post!! So much for gratitude.

I perceive this moment by the Papers that Scott has written a third letter. I shall not reply to it unless something in it should render this absolutely necessary.

I wonder that General Scott has not alluded to the resignation of General Cass. I have not heard from the old gentleman since we separated. It may become necessary that I should allude to his offer & desire to withdraw his resignation & return to the Cabinet.

In a memorandum made by me some time after the event, I state as follows:—"On Monday, 17 December, 1860, both Mr. Thompson & Judge Black informed me that they had held conversations with General Cass on the subject of his resignation, & that he had expressed a desire to withdraw it & return to the Cabinet. I gave this no encouragement. His purpose to resign had been known for several days, & his actual resignation had been prepared three days before it was delivered to me. The world knew all about it, & had he returned, the explanation would have been very embarrassing," &c. Am I correct?

I send you a copy of the joint order of Mr. Holt & yourself. I wrote to you before, as I have already stated (the letter may not have been received), on the subject of the preparation of a statement by yourself in regard to your course in the Navy

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 599.

Department during the last months of the administration. I know you took measures to prepare for the approaching troubles with a wise precaution. Your testimony before the Hale Committee proves this to be the fact.

Miss Lane desires to be most kindly remembered to Mrs. Toucey & yourself. I wish we could enjoy the privilege of seeing you both at Wheatland.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. Toucey, I remain always,  
Very respectfully your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: ISAAC TOUCEY.

P. S. Please to acknowledge this in a line on its receipt. You can afterwards write.

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## REPLY TO GENERAL SCOTT.<sup>1</sup>

[December 11, 1862.]

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER:

When I said to you in my letter of the 17th November that with a few remarks I should close the controversy between Gen. Scott and myself, I could not have had the most remote conception that he would introduce into it a new element, consisting of a late telegram obtained by him from some unnamed individual in Washington, "but not of the Ordnance Bureau," to sustain his position in relation to the arms transferred for storage to the Southern arsenals, by order of the War Department, in December, 1859.

To this telegram I confine myself, leaving the assertion of the General, that not one of the 115,000 (taken from the whole number of 541,656) of these "arms was ever condemned," to

<sup>1</sup> *National Intelligencer*, Dec. 18, 1862.

the testimony reported to the House by the Committee on Military Affairs; and his allegations that I had omitted in my letter of 17th November to mention the rifles of the old calibre of '54, and had intimated "that these arms were transferred to equalize in some degree the deposits among the different States," and not for the convenience of storage and sale, to a simple inspection of the two last paragraphs of the letter itself.

My business at present is solely with the nameless telegram; and with this, side by side, I shall present an official report from Captain (now Colonel) Maynadier, of the Ordnance Bureau. This was communicated to Mr. Stanton, Chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, by Secretary Holt, in a letter dated on the 9th January, 1861, in which he says: "The other information asked for, in regard to the number and description of arms 'distributed since the first day of January, 1860, and to whom, and at what price,' will be found in the accompanying statements, Nos. 2 and 3, from the Ordnance Bureau."

By reference to this statement No. 2, it will be found that neither North Carolina, nor Mississippi, nor Kentucky had received any of their quota of arms; and by this it also appears that the number delivered to each of the seven Southern States mentioned in the telegram was, to Virginia 450, South Carolina 646, Georgia 390, Florida 100, Alabama 320, Louisiana 185, and Mississippi *none*. This is the number of arms, all told, which each of these States received; but, whether from design or ignorance, this statement, so essential to a proper understanding of the subject, has been entirely suppressed in the telegram.

I shall not intimate, because I do not believe, that these facts could have been known to Gen. Scott at the time he incorporated this telegram in his last letter, although it might have been expected that, as Commanding General of the army, he would have felt sufficient interest in the subject to examine this important report from the Committee on Military Affairs. Certain it is that if the author of the telegram had announced the small quota of arms received by each of these States, and had not left it for the imagination to magnify the number, the General could not have rested an argument on so limited and frail a foundation. He would rather have united with Mr. Stanton, when presenting this statement No. 2 to the House of Representatives, on the 9th January, 1861, in saying: "There are a good deal of rumors,



and speculations, and misapprehensions as to the true state of this matter."

Yours, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,  
11th December, 1862.

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FROM SENATOR SAULSBURY.<sup>1</sup>

SENATE CHAMBER, WASHINGTON, Dec. 15, 1862.

HON. JAMES BUCHANAN.

DEAR SIR:—Above is a copy of the resolution just offered in the Senate by Mr. Davis of Kentucky.<sup>2</sup> We let the Republicans manage the question of its present consideration. Trumbull objected. My impression is that it will be the occasion for great misrepresentation & abuse of yourself and your administration, but whether the Senate will be so unjust as to pass the resolution under the circumstances may be doubtful. Those with whom you were most intimate are not here to defend you. I shall of course protest against it, and if you think it prudent to convey me any information to aid me in opposing the resolution, I should be happy to receive it.

Your Obdt. Servt.

W. SAULSBURY.

Have you copies of your letters in reply to General Scott?

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 600.

<sup>2</sup> The resolution was as follows: "*Resolved*, That after it had become manifest that an insurrection against the United States was about to break out in several of the Southern States, James Buchanan, then President, from sympathy with the conspirators and their treasonable project, failed to take necessary and proper measures to prevent it: wherefore he should receive the censure and condemnation of the Senate and the American people."

TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,  
16 December 1862.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have just received your favor of the 15th Instant. I think you will come to the conclusion that I ought not to publish. I have also received Mr. Davis' Resolution, which I consider infamous. If two years after a Presidential term has expired the Senate can go back & try, condemn, & execute the former incumbent, who would accept the office? Besides, the charge is wholly without foundation, as is established by my letters to General Scott. I have sent some copies of them to Senator Saulsbury, who sent me a copy of the Resolution.

Whether Judge Black will take any part in this matter I do not know. He was [in] the Cabinet throughout the whole term. If he should, he would have a powerful influence with Senator Cowan. I must rely on you mainly for information.

Unless the Resolution is the result of a caucus, I should hardly think it could pass the Senate. I may have occasion for Mr. Carlisle's professional services before the termination of the proceedings.

From your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

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TO MR. HENRY.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,  
19 December 1862.

MY DEAR JAMES/

I have received yours of the 15th Instant, with your description of the property on Staten Island. I have no doubt it is a correct representation. The distance from the landing, 30 min-

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Partly printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 601.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 601.

utes' walk, & two miles from your own house, is an objection; but the idea of keeping four men servants & such an establishment as would be necessary is scarcely consistent with my means. I have lost heavily by the troubles of the times, & I wish to preserve the principal of what I am worth (chiefly) for my family. Besides, in my peculiar position, which you perfectly understand, my purchase or removal would give occasion to fresh rumors of a disagreeable character. I have about \$15,000 in currency which I am very desirous to invest, & I wish you could assist me in doing it. I presume an investment in this property would yield but a small interest as rent. I might add that the Democracy of Pennsylvania, now just rising into power, to which I owe so much, would be outraged at my abandonment of the State in my old age.

You have doubtless witnessed the infamous attempt of Senator Davis to pass a resolution of censure on myself; & although it has failed, the spirit to do me injustice still prevails in the Republican party. They will at last, without the least just cause, endeavor to cast the responsibility of the war upon myself. Although this is simply ridiculous in itself, they will endeavor to make it appear a reality.

There is some malignant person in New York who sends me disagreeable slips from New York papers, which I generally burn without reading. In the last one my eye was caught by "Harper's Weekly," printed at the head of a low caricature on myself. I just thought that Mr. Croswell had made a bad selection of Harper's Monthly. If this gentleman had not offered to correct Thurlow Weed's lies, I should have had this done in some other manner. The time has now passed. I presume he was afraid; & certainly he was under no obligation to assume this task.

Mr. John Quincy Adams delivered an address before the New York Historical Society on the 30 April, 1839, *which I very, very much* desire to obtain. I spoke earnestly to Mr. Schell about it the last time he was here; but I suppose he has forgotten it. I would give any reasonable price for a copy. I wish very much that you could procure me one. If this cannot be done, you might find it in some of the Public Libraries & make a copy for me from pages 68 & 69, of what he says on the subject of secession.

We are getting along here in the usual style. I am not disheartened, but, trusting in God, I hope my enemies will obtain no advantage over me.

The two Harriets & Miss Hetty desire to be kindly remembered to Mrs. Henry & yourself.

With my kindest regards to her, I remain

Yours very affectionately

JAMES BUCHANAN.

JAMES BUCHANAN HENRY, ESQ.

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1863.

TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

1 January 1863.

MY DEAR SIR/

Many a happy New Year to you, my good & much valued friend! May your days be long & prosperous & your death be happy!

I duly received your favors of the 16th & 19th ultimo. The letter of resignation addressed to me by Mr. Stanton is in the usual form. It is a departure from this in that of Mr. Holt which gives it peculiar significance. All these letters were filed in the State Department.

I observe in the National Intelligencer of the 30th ultimo there is published a letter from N. S. Reneau, dated on the 25 October, 1859, under the heading of the "Filibuster Design on Cuba in 1859." To the best of my recollection, the kind suggestion of the Editors is correct that I had never seen that letter. But if I had, it would have only been a subject of laughter. Reneau, a weak & vain man, was non compos mentis (I mean this literally) in regard to Cuba. He afforded us much amusement. According to his own account, he was acting in concert with the Captain General. If his representations had been worth

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

attention, & I inquired into the matter, I would have put the expedition down as I had done all filibustering expeditions. But no such expedition existed except in his own brain. If he is, as alleged, a Colonel in the Confederate Army, Heaven help the men under his command!

The letter addressed by Mr. Thompson to myself, dated June 7, 1861, & recently published in the New York Tribune & other Republican Papers (I wonder they published it) is of an entirely different character. I never received it. I am truly sorry it was suppressed. It would have afforded me a fine opportunity of presenting my views to the South on the subject of their secession.

In examining my tri-weekly Intelligencers, with a view to having them bound at the end of the year, I find there is one missing: that of Tuesday August 23d, No. 9367. When passing the office of the Intelligencer, I would thank you to procure & send it to me, & if easily procured I should like to have three or four copies of my last letter in reply to General Scott.

Please to remember me most kindly to Mr. Carlisle & Dr. Jones.

Miss Lane, with the kindest wishes, desires me to give you the compliments of the Season.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

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### TO MR. HENRY.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, January 7, 1863.

MY DEAR JAMES:—

I have received your favor of the 5th instant and am much indebted to you for Mr. Adams' oration. I send you the price.

Mr. Croswell has not written to me. It is now out of time for the publication of an article in reply to Weed's letter and

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 578.

the election story. I do not believe that Mr. C. intends to publish such an article; and I desire that nothing further should be said to him on the subject. Let him do as he pleases.

I feel very solicitous about the course of Governor Seymour and the New York Democracy. He will be surrounded by men of principle in proportion to their interest. I know them well. I trust that they may not produce a reaction. I have much confidence in Governor Seymour himself, and regret that he has been obliged to "back out" in regard to the Police Commissioners.

I owe you many thanks for your kind letter of the 24th ultimo. I have been calm and tranquil under the abuse I have received, and would be positively happy were it not for the troubles of the country. I am much indebted to General Scott for his attack. My vindication against his charges has been of great service to me throughout the country south and west of New York. Of this I have daily evidence. My statements have not to my knowledge been attacked even by the Republican papers. I have no confidence in the ——— knowing by whom it is controlled. But all things will, at last, come right.

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Harriet Buchanan is still here, but will return home to-morrow.

"The two Pollies" and Miss Hetty send you their kindest regards.

Yours affectionately,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

JAMES BUCHANAN HENRY, ESQ.

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TO MRS. ROOSEVELT.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 14 February 1863.

MY DEAR MADAM/

I often hear of your health & happiness through Harriet; but have determined to hear directly from yourself, if I can

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 603.



accomplish this by addressing you a letter. It is now "the auld lang syne" since we first met; but to save all unpleasant feelings, I was then much older than yourself. You captivated me at once, & I have ever since remained faithful & true, & am now, in my old age, your devoted friend. I should be a happy, as I am a contented man, were it not for the calamities of the Country. Still, I enjoy the consciousness that for many years I warned my countrymen of the approaching danger; & during my administration I did every thing in my power to preserve the Union. Until I began to write history, I never fully appreciated the part which those called the Douglas Democrats had in hastening the catastrophe. Had they at Charleston simply consented to recognize the decision of the Supreme Court in the Dred Scott case, the Democratic party would not have been divided. This was all on which the Southern Delegates insisted. They said truly that it made no difference to them in point of fact whether slavery was abolished in the territories by Act of Congress, according to the Republican creed, or by an Act of the Territorial Legislature, according to the creed of Squatter Sovereignty. The Delegation from New York, headed by Dean Richmond, by their refusal to submit to the constitutional laws of the land as declared by the Supreme Court, committed a fatal blunder. It would be curious to speculate what might have been the present condition of the Country, had the Fernando Wood, instead of the Dean Richmond Delegates been admitted at Charleston. Still, all this affords no excuse for the conduct of the secessionists, & for their attack on Fort Sumter.

I have been twice disappointed in not seeing Prince John. He is now, I perceive, figuring extensively in politics, & I trust successfully. He is able, eloquent, witty, & eccentric. He sometimes carries too much sail for his ballast; but I like him very much. Why cannot he & Judge Roosevelt take a run to Wheatland? How much good it would do me to see them!

I have not heard from our much valued friend, Augustus Schell, for a long time.

Is it not strange that among a population so numerous & so intelligent & enterprising as ours, the war has not yet produced one great General? McClellan is the best among them, unless it may be Rosecrans. During the French Revolution there sprang up, often from the ranks, Generals of the first order,

possessing dash & strategy & capable of conducting a war of invasion in the most efficient manner.

I sometimes hear of Lady Ouseley through Miss Lane. I rejoice that her daughter is so well married, & shall ever hear of her health & prosperity with the greatest satisfaction. When you write, please to remember me to her in the kindest terms. Remember me, also, kindly to Sir William.

Miss Lane feels the death of her brother very sensibly.

It would require much ingenuity to reconcile the apparently conflicting statements of Mr. Mercier and Mr. Seward. These will not, I think, lead to any serious consequences. The difficulty has arisen from the modern practice of publishing indiscriminately diplomatic correspondence.

Please to remember me kindly to the Judge, & believe me ever to be respectfully and affectionately

Your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MRS. J. J. ROOSEVELT.

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### TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, February 23, 1863.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I have received yours of the 16th instant and I can scarcely tell you how much obliged I feel for it and the enclosed papers. In consequence of your information, I have been able to find everything I sought.

I feel how important it would be for myself to publish a collection of my speeches on the different subjects to which you refer, and especially on slavery; but I am too old and too lazy to undertake the task. There are a few of these speeches which might be useful to the country when they reach the point of examining seriously the acts of the present administration outside of the war.

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 604.

Miss Lane and myself were highly gratified with your last interesting visit. You became more like a member of the little family than ever before. The information of which you possess so inexhaustible a store was communicated in a familiar manner, and we enjoyed your conversation very much. How delighted we should always be to see you; but your distance forbids the hope that we can often enjoy this pleasure.

Miss Lane left me on Tuesday last on a visit to her Uncle Edward near Philadelphia. I sent your letter after her.

I wish I had some news to communicate which might prove interesting to you. I know nothing of this kind for the present, and to speculate concerning the future in the terrible condition of our country would be vain labor.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

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TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 19 March 1863.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 12th Instant, & always rejoice to hear of your good health & prosperity.

I have been absent for a few days on a visit to a friend in Chester County; & on my return home I was rejoiced to find Governor Porter. We passed a very pleasant time together, talking of old times, & of the present as well as the past.

Miss Lane has not been at home for several weeks. She has been on a visit to her uncle & his family at Oxford Church.

I wish I had some news to communicate which would be interesting to you. I have almost ceased to speculate upon the future condition of our Country, & yet I entertain much hope

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 604.

that all will yet be well. I cannot entertain the idea of a division of the Union. May God, in His good Providence, restore it!  
From your friend as ever

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON : GEORGE G. LEIPER.

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TO MISS LANE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, 20 March, '63.

MY DEAR HARRIET/

I send you a letter just received from Mrs. Roosevelt, in the very condition it came to hand; & yet I scarcely believe it has been violated. The envelope directed to me was open just as I send it.

The talented & faithful Spencer will soon deliver a lecture on Temperance. He has invited the girls to attend & promised to procure them tickets. That it will be able & eloquent you will not doubt.

Two or three days ago I received a letter from old Mary Wall. She writes to me, she says, because Miss Hetty & yourself have been married & left Wheatland. Who are the happy & well governed husbands she does not mention. Poor old thing, she must be in a forlorn condition. I have enclosed her letter to Dr. Blake & requested him to inquire into her situation. Miss Hetty says she might probably be admitted into Christ Church Hospital in West Philadelphia. She is, I believe, a good Episcopalian & has several hundred dollars if any body would take the trouble of collecting it for her. I sincerely pity her.

Please to return the enclosed to brother Edward. Your purchases, Miss Hetty says, have all arrived.

With love to all, yours affectionately,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MISS LANE.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection. Inaccurately printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 605.

TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 21 March 1863.

MY DEAR SIR/

I am much indebted to you for the Daily Globe of April, '62, containing your letter to the Editor. I was not aware that this had been published by Mr. Rives, & I think you were, also, ignorant of it. But it is just the thing.

I enclose you a letter which I have received from Mary Wall. Pray keep it a profound secret that Miss Lane & Miss Hetty have both been married. I should like to know who are their husbands. I pity the old woman & would cheerfully contribute to her wants; but I cannot pay her expenses to England. Besides, she would be in greater want & misery there than she is here. There is an excellent Episcopal Institution for such persons in Philadelphia; & I think through the influence of Miss Lane she might obtain a home in it. What property has she? I cannot make this out from her letter. Is she a member in full communion with the Episcopal Church? Miss Hetty thinks she is. Miss Harriet has been absent for some time. From your benevolent heart I know you will take pleasure in answering these questions. Above all, do not let the old woman know anything of the Episcopal Institution, lest she might be disappointed. I do not know that they would charge her anything for her living; but if they should, it would be a trifle. If she had anything to give, this might facilitate her admission.

I very often think most affectionately of you & other friends in Washington. But why should I tax their time by asking them to write answers to letters of mine containing no news? Correspondence ought to be an interchange of equivalents between friends. I have no news to give, & to write letters on the beauty of virtue & on the fitness of things to those who are already virtuous & are just what they ought to be, would be a vain labor. I wish I had something to communicate which might provoke a long letter from you in reply. My life is tranquil & monotonous, although I see much company, especially from my own State. Ere a month, I shall enter my 72d year, should I live so long, &

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 605.

my health is excellent, considering my age. If you could know how glad I should be to see you & to talk over with you past & present events, you would never fail to come this way on your route to New Jersey & New York.

I regret very much the fate of your able, honest, & time-honored Court. I feel a warm personal regard for C. J. Dunlap. Such acts of wanton tyranny will surely return to plague the inventors. There will be a "tit for tat." Why could not the Judge Advocate General, with the rank, pay, & emoluments of a Colonel of Cavalry, have saved his brother-in-law?

I perceive by the *Intelligencer* that Judge Black has gained his great Quicksilver mine cause. This alone ought to make him rich. It is long since I have heard from him; but he will drop in some day.

Please to present me most kindly . . .<sup>1</sup>

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### TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

10 April 1863.

MY DEAR SIR/

I ought ere this to have acknowledged your very welcome letters of the 21st & 26th ultimo. Your letters are always gratifying to me, & I regret that I can give you so little in return. To attempt to furnish you political news would be truly sending coals to Newcastle.

I do not think it necessary at present to republish your letter in refutation of Mr. Fessenden's statement. Thanks to your kindness, it is now of record in the *Globe*, & I presume it has been of course transferred to the *Congressional Globe*. You might look.

My defence has been greatly enlarged, & will be published in due time. I do not think this is the proper moment. Thanks to General Scott, I need not now be in so great a hurry.

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<sup>1</sup> The remaining sheet of this letter is now missing.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Partly printed in Curtis's *Buchanan*, II. 606.



I am truly rejoiced to learn that our good & large-hearted friend Sullivan has recovered his health. May blessings rest upon his "frosty pow"!

I am sorry to learn that Dr. Jones has had a severe attack of gout. This is the effect of high living, in which I used to participate with him in ancient times. He is one of my most esteemed friends, & is a faithful & true man. May he live & prosper for many years!

Miss Lane had an idea of visiting Mrs. Berghmans, but not since the death of her brother. She is still in Philadelphia, but I expect her home in a week or ten days. The loss of her brother has made a deep impression upon her. She, although the youngest, is now the last of her father's children.

Our friend Carlisle sent me the brief of his argument in the case of the *Brilliant*. I perused it at the time with great care & great satisfaction. His points are presented in lucid & convincing order; & in my humble judgment he ought to have gained the cause. I know not why I did not acknowledge the brief at the time it was received. This I ought to have done. Judge Black, who was here yesterday, spoke of his argument in the highest terms. By the bye, the Judge really seems to be embarrassed with his money. He is at a loss to know what to do with it. I gave him advice on this subject; but whether he will follow it, I know not.

I am truly sorry that Mr. Carlisle has felt it to be his duty to refuse to take the oath prescribed by the New Court. I do not know what it contains. If he cannot conscientiously take it, there is an end of the question. If he has refused simply because the Court had no right to require it, I think he has not acted prudently. He is an able & honorable man & a discriminating & powerful lawyer, & I fear he may suffer in a pecuniary view. Please to remember me to him in the most friendly terms.

Poor Mary Wall! If she has determined to return to England, I shall cheerfully contribute to pay her expenses. You may set me down for \$20.

Could not you pay me a visit & bring Mr. Carlisle with you, when the spring fairly opens?

From your friend as ever

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

P. S. Miss Hetty, of whom you kindly inquire, has entirely recovered her health, & is now larger than I ever saw her. I cannot keep her in the house, or prevent her from working in the garden or about the lawn.

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### TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, May 8, 1863.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I owe you many thanks for President Lord's picture of Abolitionism. It is clearly and forcibly written, and proceeding from a New England clergyman, it is almost miraculous.

I fear you are too sanguine in predicting that in another year there will be great changes in favor of Democracy in the New England States. The clergy have taught the people there that slavery is a mortal sin demanding extirpation.

The mass of the Democracy in this State is as true to the Constitution and the Union as the needle to the pole. With the exception of a few fanatics, they are not extreme. They will obey the laws, and await the process of the ballot-box for redress. Unless something unexpected should occur, they will elect their governor in October by a large majority.

From the current of events, it is to be apprehended that it will be long before the Democracy can obtain a majority in the Senate. The people already begin to speculate upon this subject. They say it would be unjust that the six New England States with a population scarcely greater than that of New York, should have a representation in the Senate equal to that of New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri combined, not to speak of Western Virginia, and the thinly peopled Territories soon to be admitted as States. For my own part, I am willing to follow where the Constitution leads, trusting to Providence for the final result. Still, I should be rejoiced if even a single Senator could be elected from New England.

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 607.

Miss Lane came home for a few days a brief time ago; but returned to her uncle's to be confirmed and admitted as a member of the Episcopal Church. When she next returns, I have no doubt she will be too happy to write to you.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

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TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, May 18, 1863.

MY DEAR SIR:—

In answer to your request of the 11th instant:—I regret that I have not a single copy of the Documents to which you refer, except those forming a part of the entire set of Documents for 1860–61. It is but a few weeks since I gave the last copy to a friend. I have received Judge Parker's Letters and Address, for which please to accept my thanks. You inform me, in your note of the 14th, that you enclose me a slip containing facts upon a subject alluded to in our conversation when you were at Wheatland. *This I have not received.*

Miss Lane has not yet returned, and my evenings are rather solitary. Still, I resign myself in a philosophic and, I trust, Christian spirit to the privations inseparable from old age. I wish, with all my heart, that I had a few neighbors like yourself.

I try to think as little of public affairs as possible; but they will ever intrude. If I could be of any service, I should sacrifice all to restore the Union; but as I can contribute nothing towards the accomplishment of this most desirable object, I relieve my mind from the subject as much as possible.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 608.

TO MISS LANE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 26 June 1863.

MY DEAR MISS LANE/

I enclose you a letter from James S. Lane; which under your general license so far as your Uncle John's estate is concerned, I took the liberty of opening.

Lancaster is in a state of agitation & alarm. They have determined on motion of Mr. Hager to defend the city to the last extremity. I do not consider the danger great so far as we are concerned. It may be otherwise at Harrisburg. You had better now remain at your Uncle Edward's; because if you were to return home, if there were any danger I should send you back. I suppose you are aware that Doctor Nevin has sent Alice & Blanche to New York. I do not think we are in any serious danger in Lancaster; but if we were you could not by possibility remain.

Mr. Swarr is here & I want to send this to Town by him.  
In haste

Yours affectionately,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MISS LANE.

TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND, July 8, 1863.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I have received your note of the 5th instant, with the article enclosed. This I have read with much satisfaction. It is the philosophy of politics applied to our present unfortunate condition.

It is probable the rebels might have paid a flying visit to Lancaster had not the bridge across the Susquehanna at Wrightsville been burnt down. I remained quietly at home, and would

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 609.

<sup>2</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 609.

not have removed under any circumstances. They were within eleven miles of us.

I am at a loss for precise dates, which you can supply. When was the Anti-Slavery Society organized at Boston, and when did Thompson arrive in this country, and how long did he remain? By answering these questions, if convenient, you will greatly oblige me.

Miss Lane is now at home, and desires to be most kindly remembered to you. My health is as good as usual.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

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TO MR. FLINN.<sup>1</sup>

[About July 9, 1863.]

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received the Book, & am indebted to you for having procured it for me.

I am glad to learn that you soon propose to write me a longer letter.

The Rebels, when at Wrightsville, were within eleven miles of us. No Democrat, within my knowledge, was in the least degree alarmed for his personal safety. Not one of my personal or political friends, male or female, thought of leaving Lancaster. Miss Lane entertained no fears. I doubt not, however, that they have made sad havoc among the horses of my tenant in Franklin County. I trust that General Lee may speedily be driven across the Potomac. He would never have been here had not Governor Curtin been such a poor devil.

Your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WILLIAM FLINN, ESQUIRE.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 645.

TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 23 July 1863.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received the National Intelligencer containing the well deserved eulogy on our deceased friend Mr. Sullivan. I saw a notice of his death some days before in the Philadelphia Age & immediately wrote a letter of sympathy to his widow, an excellent woman, worthy of such a husband. I felt deeply the death of Mr. Sullivan, from our ancient friendly & social relation, which had continued without interruption for many years.

By the bye, you do not seem to have been aware, as I was not myself until a few days ago, that my franking privilege had been abolished. It was first brought to my notice by the receipt of letters & packages in the form of letters marked with double postage because not prepaid. The P. M. General, in his instructions, ought to have noticed this. It was hardly consistent with the dignity of Congress, whilst retaining the privilege for its own members, to strike at Mrs. Harrison, if she be still living, Mrs. Polk, Mr. Fillmore, General Pierce, & myself. But I care nothing about it. This privilege, in all its forms, ought to be entirely abolished. Members of Congress have abused it to an enormous extent. Neither the Queen nor any member of the British Parliament can frank a letter.

I have not been so well for some days. My rheumatism has partially returned with strong symptoms of dyspepsia. I propose going to the Bedford Springs some day next week, should nothing occur to prevent.

The draft gives much dissatisfaction in this County, especially among poor men with large families dependent for support on their labor. The law, however, will not here be forcibly resisted.

How glad I should be to meet you & other old Washington friends; but this seems to be impossible.

Unless some great & unforeseen change should take place, Judge Woodward will be elected Governor of our State by a large majority.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 609.



Miss Lane desires me to present her kindest regards to you.  
From your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

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TO MR. SCHELL.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

25 July 1863.

MY DEAR SIR/

It is so long since I have heard from you that I wish to know what has become of you & how you are enjoying yourself.

Although taking no active part in politics, I have yet been observing, with great interest, the events that are passing. I have been much gratified with Gov: Seymour's course; but fear he is now about to fall into an error. The Conscription Law, though unwise & unjust in many of its provisions, is not, in my opinion, unconstitutional. The Constitution confers upon Congress in the clearest terms the power "to raise & support armies," without any other limitation except that "no appropriation of money to that use shall be for a longer term than two years." How shall these armies be raised? Can this only be done by voluntary enlistment? Or may not Congress resort to a Conscription law as a necessary & proper means, such as is employed by other nations for this purpose?

I think the confusion on the subject has arisen from the blending the restricted power over the militia, an entirely distinct question, with that of the general power in Congress to raise armies.

But I merely make these suggestions. It would be very unfortunate if, after the present administration have committed so many clear violations of the Constitution, the Democratic party should place itself in opposition to what I think must be

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 610.

the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States on this question.

I have not been so well as usual for the last few days. I intend to go to Bedford towards the end of next week, if nothing should prevent, & shall take Miss Hetty along with me, whose robust health has been giving way for some time past. Miss Lane & Miss Buchanan will remain at home. I would request you to accompany me there; but I know the company will be small, & the place would not be agreeable to you under these circumstances.

From the last letter received from James Henry, I fear he will lose his excellent wife. I sympathize with him deeply in this gloomy prospect. Her loss to him would be irreparable. May Heaven avert it!

Cannot my 15 Tennessee 5 per cent. Bonds be now sold at a rate bearing a just proportion to the price of the 6 per cent. Bonds?

"The signs of the times" in this State indicate the election of Judge Woodward by a large majority. Unless some great & unexpected change should take place such I confidently predict will be the result.

Miss Lane & Miss Buchanan desire to be very kindly remembered to you.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

AUGUSTUS SCHELL, Esq.

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TO MR. BAKER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 26 July 1863.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have no news to communicate of the least importance, & write only to keep the chain of friendship bright between you and myself. My health has not been as good as usual for the last

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Partly printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 611.

few days; but the visit to the Bedford Springs will, I think, be of service to me. The fabled fountain to restore youth has never yet been discovered, & there is no remedy for old age but Christian philosophy & resignation. By the bye, should you have business at Broad Top, how happy I should be to have your company thus far, or until the end of the journey, should you desire to use the water. There has been, & probably will be but little company there, & Farmer Baker must, I presume, stay at home at this busy season. We propose to leave on Thursday next. I shall take Miss Hetty with me, whose health has been declining for some time. Miss Lane & Annie Buchanan will remain at Wheatland.

What has become of the visit of Mr. Reed and yourself, from which I had anticipated so much pleasure? I have heard nothing either from or of Mr. Dillon for a long time. Dr. Sample passed a day & night with me last week. We had a most agreeable time talking over "old times" & our memories of men of the past generation. He is old & feeble in body, & somewhat deaf; but his intellect is still clear. He seems to be contented with his lot, & in him Christianity has disarmed the fear of death.

You may probably have heard of an amusing incident which occurred on the Sunday when it was supposed by many that the rebels would be upon us. On that day I met Newton Lightner & Mr. McGonigle on Dr. Atlee's pavement. We were conversing on the news of the day, but not so as to give just offence even to a rank abolitionist; when suddenly Miss Atlee raised the window & ordered us off the pavement. I shall neither attempt to paint her countenance nor detail her language on this occasion.

Please to remember me in the kindest terms to Mrs. Baker, Mrs. Hopkins, & the other members of your most agreeable family. So much for Sunday morning before going to Church.

Ever your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

J. B. BAKER, ESQUIRE.

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TO MISS LANE.<sup>1</sup>

BEDFORD SPRINGS, 3 August 1863.

MY DEAR HARRIET/

We arrived here safe & sound on Friday last before dinner. I hardly ever passed a more uncomfortable day than that on which I left, having suffered the whole day with a violent diarrhœa. At night Mrs. Baker gave me a dose of your friend Brown's Anti-Cholera mixture which cured me outright. The water has had its usual good effect upon me & I think I needed it much. No healing fountain can cure old age; but with God's blessing it may assist in gently sloping the way which leads to death.

The company here consists of about 150; & I think there is fully that number. There are many sensible & agreeable people among them; but they are not very gay. On Saturday night they made the first attempt to get up a cotillion & it partially succeeded: but they wanted the buoyancy & brilliancy of former times.

There are several naughty secession girls here from Baltimore,—some of them very bright. My principal amusement has been with them, & I am really inclined to believe they give General Schenck a hard time of it. The stories they tell of how they provoke him are truly amusing. They praise General Wool; & I have no doubt they flattered him into a compliance with many of their wishes. They speak rather contemptuously of our friend General Dix; but Schenck is their abomination.

I treat them playfully, & tell them I love them so that it would be impossible for me ever to consent to part from them; & that the shocking idea has never once entered my head of living in a separate confederacy from them. I am like Ruth, & that they must not entreat me from following after them. We must be one & indivisible. I hear accounts from the other side & it is certain the Baltimore women must give General Schenck a rough road to travel.

Our own little party is very agreeable. Mrs. Nevin is as gay as a girl let loose from school after a long session of hard service. I could hardly tell you how much she enjoys herself.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 612.

Miss Hetty gets along quietly & well. Her manners are ladylike & she behaves with perfect propriety. Mrs. Baker is very good & very ladylike; and Miss Swarr is modest but cheerful. I need not speak of Messrs. Swarr, Baker, Carpenter, & North. We are all grateful. There have been many kind inquiries after you; but a watering place is like the world, even the grandest performers are soon forgotten.

Mr. Babcock, of the Yeates Institute, preached here last night; but I did not hear him. Those who did say he preached very well. I never saw him, to my knowledge.

I am treated by all with kindness & respect. I saw Mrs. Patton & Miss Hamilton on Saturday evening. The health of the latter is evidently improving.

Give my love to Miss Anne, Elizabeth Speer Buchanan, & remember me kindly to Mrs. Fahnestock. I hope you are all getting along happily.

Yours affectionately,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MISS LANE.

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## TO MR. LEWIS.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

22 August, 1863.

MY DEAR SIR:

"Should auld acquaintance be forgot?" I very much desire to see you, and think that in this hot season you might pass a few days agreeably at Wheatland. You shall receive a most cordial welcome. Besides, I desire to consult you on some matters important to myself and probably to the public.

I returned from the Bedford Springs on Saturday last, where I passed a fortnight very agreeably. I left the place crowded, and many of the people were according to my taste. The people of Bedford Town and County gave me as hearty a

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<sup>1</sup> This invitation was accepted. See Konkle's *Life of Chief Justice Ellis Lewis*, p. 254.

reception as in the days of my power. If you will come here, we will go to Ephrata and ride about the country wherever you please.

Your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: ELLIS LEWIS.

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TO JUDGE WOODWARD.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 5 September 1863.

DEAR SIR/

Until I received your note this morning, the fact that I had written to you in July last had not for weeks recurred to my memory. I expected no answer. I probably ought not to have written at all on the subject of the Conscription Law. Had I reflected for a moment that you were a Judge of the Supreme Court as well as the Democratic Candidate for Governor, I should have refrained. My abhorrence throughout life has been the mixing up of party politics with the administration of Justice. I perceived that in New York the party were fast making the unconstitutionality of the Conscription Law the leading & prominent point in the canvass, & I wrote (I believe with good effect) to an able & influential friend, guarding him against it & referring to Mr. Monroe's opinion. At the same time it occurred to me that a word of caution to you confidentially, *as a Candidate*, *not as a Judge*, might not be inappropriate.

I consider that on the result of your election vaster issues depend both for weal & for woe to our Country than on that of any other Gubernatorial Canvass ever held in Pennsylvania. I am, therefore, anxious for your success, & believe it will be accomplished. My information, though not as extensive as in former times, proceeds from honest & sound-judging Democrats.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 577.



It is given voluntarily, & is generally though not universally cheering.

I beg you not to answer this note.

Yrs. very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

JUDGE G. W. WOODWARD.

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TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 22 September 1863.

MY DEAR SIR/

It afforded me great pleasure to learn from yours of the 14th Instant that you still enjoy health & happiness. May this yet continue for years to come! I have recently had a severe & very painful attack of rheumatism; but it has nearly passed away.

I met Mr. Kelly at the Bedford Springs, & we talked very kindly of you & yours. I found my old friends there as kind & as enthusiastic as ever. My visit was very agreeable.

I cannot anticipate the result of the Governor's election, as I was able to do in former years when I took an active part in politics. The news, however, is generally cheering. It is the most important State election which has ever been held in Pennsylvania. God grant us a safe deliverance!

I saw Judge Woodward when he was in Lancaster at our great meeting on Thursday last, though I did not attend the meeting. He seems to be in fine spirits, & will, if elected, make an excellent Governor. Governor Porter & Judge Black were with us. The Governor's health is still good, & he is as shrewd and observant as ever. Judge Black's speech will, I think, make a noise in the world. It is able & eloquent, & *very strong*.

I hope nothing may occur to prevent you from visiting me the next time you entertain so good an intention. This I hope may ere long occur.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 613.

Miss Lane desires to be very kindly remembered to you.

We expect a visit to-day from Sir Henry Holland, & she is busy in making preparations.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: GEORGE G. LEIPER.

P. S. I saw an account of the great meeting to which you refer, & was happy to perceive that you are still in the harness.

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### TO JUDGE BLACK.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 25 Sept. 1863.

MY DEAR SIR,

I now return you Mr. Schell's letter of July 28, desiring to know, according to your endorsement upon it, "whether the statement of Thurlow Weed to the London Observer is true or false," together with the copy of your answer. Mr. Schell evidently intended his letter & your answer for public information; but the latter is of such a character that it cannot be published.

I had hoped that I might never have occasion to speak to you on a subject so disagreeable to yourself; & this I had purposely avoided until you informed me of Mr. Schell's letter, on your last visit. Pardon me now for saying, in frankness & in friendship, that I did expect at the time you would voluntarily publish a simple contradiction of Mr. Weed's statement. You could with propriety do nothing more. He was sent abroad in a semi-official character which gave force to his statement; & this was extensively republished in the Journals of this country. Although the duty of contradicting it devolved upon every member of my Cabinet, yet this was especially your duty as the Premier. When the subject was brought to your notice some time thereafter (at the time without my knowledge) by friends

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

at Washington, you informed me by letter that you would contradict it on my request. This of course I declined to make, & there the matter would have ended so far as I was concerned.

Mr. Weed's publication, had it even been as true as it is false, contained the severest indirect censure upon at least some one member of the Cabinet, & this might be applied to any of them according to the fancy of the accuser. This was no less than a violation of the seal of official confidence as to what transpired in Cabinet Council, ever held as sacred as the confessional. This has never been violated, to my knowledge or recollection, by any Cabinet Minister, even under the strongest provocations of individual members. It certainly never ought to be; because this would put an end to all free consultations. On one occasion at least, whilst a member of Mr. Polk's Cabinet, when I was in the minority on an important question, I greatly desired that the public might know how I had voted. This, however, honor forbade me to divulge. I had no alternative but to submit or to resign.

On perusing your answer to Mr. Schell, which I thought ought to have consisted of a simple negative to Mr. Weed's statement, as in the concluding paragraph, which might have been published, you preface it by remarks which render its publication impossible. You surely do not intend that "the moderate sized volume," to which you refer, should contain a history of Cabinet consultations.

I have never heard from Mr. Schell, directly or indirectly, upon the subject, for the reason I have no doubt that he did not wish to communicate to me a copy of your answer.

I write without a particle of feeling on the subject, & remain, as ever,

Very respectfully your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: J. S. BLACK.

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TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 5 December 1863.

MY DEAR SIR/

Your favor of the 24 October was well worthy of an immediate answer; but my life here glides along so quietly & tranquilly as to afford no incidents worth communicating.

The quarrel among the Republicans to which you refer will not, I think, subserve the immediate interests of the Democratic party. They cannot afford to divide. The main object of them all is to abolish every vestige of Slavery, & they differ only as to the best means of accomplishing it. The difference between them, as I understand it, is between Tweedledum & Tweedledee. Whilst the Sumnerites would convert the States in rebellion into Territories, to be governed as such under the laws of Congress, the Blairites, preserving the name of States, would place them under the military government of the President. In either case, they can only be restored to the Union provided Slavery is abolished. The more extreme party will probably prevail, because such is the nature & history of revolutions. The Blairs will be crushed, unless they shall speedily repent. This they will not hesitate to do, should their interests so dictate.

The Democratic party must rely upon themselves & await events. I see the Democratic members have been holding meetings preparatory to the assemblage of Congress. On their prudence, firmness, & discretion much will depend. Their platform, if it be wise, will give tone to the party throughout the Country. With the vanity of age, I think I could construct one which would unite & strengthen the party; but no person consults me on such a subject.

I agree with you that however much we may condemn Secretary Chase's official conduct he is a gentleman by education & personal demeanor. He is, in my judgment, by far the ablest member of the Cabinet, not excepting even Abraham himself. The skill, however, with which he has obtained loans & managed the paper money machine will only make the crash, when it shall occur, the more terrific. His adroit management may

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 614.

delay but cannot prevent it. As long as he can issue Greenbacks with one hand as currency & receive them with the other for national loans the crazy vessel may be kept afloat.

Well! we see from the Papers that Washington is to be gay & extravagant beyond all former example during the approaching winter. Shoddy will make a grand display. How much your society, formerly the best in the Country, must have changed! Mrs. Ogle Tayloe was here about a fortnight ago, sighing over the memory of past days.

We have been more gay than usual at Wheatland for the last few months & have seen a good deal of company. I have not been out of the County since you were here, but they will have it that I am now in England.

I have thought several times of accepting your kind offer to attend to Col: Leonard. He is an ungrateful little scamp, & no reason exists why I should not sell his property. I think I shall soon send you all the papers which will prove how much he has bamboozled me. I wish you would talk to Mr. Riggs upon the subject.

Miss Lane & Miss Hetty both desire to be most kindly remembered to you. We all unite in the expression of regret that we cannot see you oftener.

With my kindest regards to Dr. Jones, I remain

Always your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

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## TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 21 December 1863.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your kind favor, & am always rejoiced to learn your continued health & happiness. May you live to enjoy a merry Christmas & a happy New Year, & a number of such,

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 615.

until in a good old age you shall be peacefully gathered to your fathers in well-grounded Christian hope.

The storm of persecution against me, as you intimate, has nearly spent itself, though the Herald & the Tribune, both of which I take, occasionally strike me a blow. My time will, however, soon come. I am now much more fully prepared than I was a year ago. I view it as a merciful dispensation of Providence that the report of General Scott to President Lincoln has been published during my lifetime, & this through his own folly.

You express the hope that we may both live to see the Constitution restored as our fathers intended it & the flag of the Union beautifully waving over our entire happy America. I fear no such glorious anticipation will be realized; certainly not for years to come. May God grant us this inestimable privilege. But I doubt, I *doubt*.

Miss Lane desires her kindest remembrance to you.

I need not say we shall always be most happy to see & welcome you at Wheatland.

Ever your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. GEORGE G. LEIPER.

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TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

31 December 1863.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 28th Instant, & am content to leave the Leonard affair to be managed by Mr. Riggs in the manner he proposes. Still, I should be much obliged to you to keep a sharp lookout over the matter. The conduct of Leonard & his wife has been all it should not have been.

We now seem to be rapidly treading the path of all former

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 615.



Republics. A large standing army necessarily produces some ambitious Commander in Chief possessing its confidence. Fortunately for the Country, no General having the pre-eminence over all the rest has yet made his appearance, unless Grant may prove to be the coming man. At the termination of the war it will probably be more difficult to get clear of the army than it was to raise it.

The time has now arrived when with perfect safety the Democrats in Congress might erect a secure platform;—but will they do it? What can be expected from a party at the head of which is a speculating German Jew? A man of the first consideration ought to have been selected as Chairman of our General Committee; & above all, he ought not to have been one of those who broke up the National Convention at Charleston. Mr. Lincoln would be less dangerous to the Republic than an unprincipled military chieftain whom the army would follow to any extremity.

My health is as usual. Miss Lane desires to be kindly remembered to you.

Ever your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JNO. B. BLAKE.

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1864.

TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 14 January 1864.

MY DEAR SIR/

Miss Lane & myself have received your Christmas greetings with peculiar pleasure, & trust you may live many years in health & prosperity.

With you I believe that the madness of men will eventually yield to conservative counsels; *but not soon*. In this respect I

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtiss's Buchanan, II. 616.

differ both from you & Governor Seymour. I yet perceive no evidence of a change so happy. It may, however, come suddenly with the crash of the paper system, which, sooner or later, is inevitable. The Democratic party is not yet prepared to act with power & unanimity. They would, at the present moment, divide, should they attempt to erect a platform. And yet, in my opinion, the time has arrived when a platform could be constructed which would stand against all external shocks & would carry the principles of the glorious old party triumphantly through the breakers.

Have you ever thought of the danger to our institutions from the disbandment of a standing army of a million of men, one fourth at least being negroes? Will they patiently & quietly consent, with arms in their hands, to return to the labors & duties of private life & to earn their living by the sweat of their brow? What does history teach in this respect? I trust in God it may be so.

As to Christianity:—it seems now to consist in preaching war instead of peace. In New England, I presume the masses are tolerably united in favor of the Gospel of War. In this portion of the world there is considerable division, though the higher law doctrine of the abolitionist would seem to be in the ascendant.

The state of public opinion in this quarter was naïvely illustrated the other day by a young lady who called to see me. She said that the church in their Town (Presbyterian) had been vacant for several months, though they gave a good salary. When, said she, a preacher comes to us on trial and we are pleased with him, after he goes away they begin to inquire whether he is a Republican or Democrat. If found to be a Republican, the Democrats oppose him; & if found to be a Democrat, the Republicans oppose him; & so, between the two, it is hard to tell whether we shall ever have another preacher.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQUIRE.

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TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 27 January 1864.

MY DEAR SIR/

I am just recovering from a rather severe illness & was only able on yesterday to leave my room. I find your two letters of Jan. 16 & Jan. 20, but am scarcely in a condition to do more than thank you for them.

My publication is ready for the Press; but the Democrats have made no issue on which to fight a Presidential battle. The struggle between them & the Republicans appears to be which shall support the war with most vigor. The Republicans care not a button how much we complain of their unconstitutional measures, their change of the war from its original purpose, &c., &c., so long as we give them a vigorous material support. From present appearances, Mr. Lincoln will be re-elected, unless some Republican Military Chieftain should supply his place, or our finances should break down.

All I have to say in regard to the Floyd acceptances is that the "gentleman of high respectability" is altogether mistaken in regard to myself, & I have no doubt is equally so in regard to Gov. Toucey.

A Senator first informed me that Drafts on the War Department payable at a future day and accepted by Gov: Floyd were on 'change in New York. I immediately sent for Mr. Floyd & asked him if it were true. He told me that Russell & Co., in order to enable them to send provisions to the army in Utah, had to anticipate their credit, & as these drafts were only payable after the money had been earned, there could be no danger. There were but 3 or 4 of them. I asked him by what law he was authorized to issue such acceptances. He said there was no law for it, but it had been the practice of the office. I told him it must at once be discontinued—that if there was no law for it, it was against law. He told me the few drafts already accepted should be immediately paid & he would never issue another. I rested satisfied, & was greatly astonished when, some months after, the fraud was discovered & the subject placed before the

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Imperfectly printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 617.

Committee of the House. Mr. Holt, in all he did, acted under my direction & with my assent.

Miss Lane desires to be most kindly remembered to you. I wish I could drop in for a day at Mount Ida.

Ever your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

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TO MR. SCHELL.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 12 February 1864.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 9th Instant. I had supposed that James Henry would have informed you of the reason I had not visited New York. When making the necessary preparations to leave home, I had a violent & very painful attack of Rheumatic Gout. Although I have now recovered from this, I still walk with difficulty & am not yet in a condition to visit your City.

I agree with you that the future of the Democratic party is discouraging. At the moment when it was clearly demonstrated that the administration, departing from the principle of conducting the war for the restoration of the Union as it was, & the Constitution as it is, had resolved to conduct it for the subjugation of the Southern States & the destruction of Slavery, the party had then an opportunity of making a noble & probably a successful issue with their opponents. That time has now passed, & the leaders of our party, beginning at New York, notwithstanding the change in the programme of our opponents, are still nearly as demonstrative in the support of the war as the Republicans. No party can succeed without a great issue, broadly placed before the people.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 617.

We are getting on here as usual, just as you left us. Harriet Buchanan is still with us, & you are often the subject of agreeable conversation in our little group.

I send you a check for the wine, & remain, very respectfully  
Your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

AUGUSTUS SCHELL, ESQ.

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TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, March 14, 1864.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I have received your letter of the 1st instant. You may well have expected to hear from me ere this, in answer to yours of the 1st February. I am sorry to say, however, that, about the time of its receipt, I again had an attack of rheumatism in my legs still more violent and painful than the former, which confined me for a considerable time to my bed and to my chamber, because I could not set my feet on the ground. Thank God! I think I have entirely recovered from it, except that I still hobble in my gait. I am, however, daily improving.

Would that I were able to visit your Arcadia in the month of June and receive your cordial welcome; but that is an enjoyment which I fear is not reserved for me.

I owe you many thanks for your very kind offer to cause my record to be stereotyped and to superintend the work. Your services would be invaluable, but I do not consider it of sufficient importance for stereotyping. By the bye, a friend the other day sent me a copy of Appleton's Cyclopædia for 1861, which I find, to my surprise, contains a tolerably fair representation of the last months of my administration, so far as the facts were known to the author. It is, however, greatly deficient in many particulars. Still, there is throughout a spirit of candor manifested, to which I have not been lately accustomed.

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 618.

I hope your meeting in New York may result in good for the country and the Democratic party. So far as I can learn and observe, there will be very great difficulty in erecting a platform on which the party can unite. It now embraces all shades of opinion, from the prosecution of the war with as much vigor as the Republicans, notwithstanding the violations of the Constitution, down to peace [with the Confederate government], which means neither more nor less than recognition. I say that this means recognition, because I entertain not the least idea that the South would return to the Union, if we were to offer to restore them with all the rights which belonged to them, as expounded by the Supreme Court, at the time of their secession. Besides, I regret to say, many good Democrats in Pennsylvania begin to be inoculated with abolition principles. I could construct a platform which would suit myself; but what is right and what is practicable are two very different things. For the latter we must await the course of events until a short time before the meeting of the convention. I entertain a warm regard both for Mr. Reed and Mr. O'Connor, but I believe both may be called extreme peace men. Have you ever reflected upon what would be the embarrassments of a Democratic administration, should it succeed to power with the war still existing and the finances in their present unhappy condition?

The Democrats of New Hampshire, with General Pierce, have fought a noble battle worthy of a better fate. I was much pleased with the article you were kind enough to send me.

Miss Lane desires to be most kindly remembered to you. Whilst it is highly improbable that we shall drop in upon you at Mount Ida, I hope it is certain you may drop in upon us at Wheatland during the approaching spring or summer. The blue-birds and other songsters are now singing around me, and the buds are ready to burst; but yet we have all kinds of weather in the course of a single day.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

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TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 13 April 1864.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have duly received your favor of the 5th Instant, & heartily rejoice that you purpose visiting me about the middle of May for the purpose mentioned in my letter. When I referred to the subject in writing to you I had not the least idea of imposing such a task on your friendship, however desirable to myself. Still, I shall be delighted to see you in the middle of May; & if with your eyes open you shall be willing to commence it, you may leave off at any moment. That is a delightful season at Wheatland, & we will exert ourselves to make your time pass as agreeably as possible. Perhaps your visit here may promote your health, which may Heaven grant! I may now say, but with fear, that I am tolerably well. I am able to hobble about. Indeed, my general health was good, even during the period when I was not able to touch the ground with my feet.

Greatly as I desire the success of the Democratic party at the Presidential election, I have not strong faith in such a glorious consummation. Still, in the present times we know not what a day may bring forth. With gold at 170, a paper dollar is worth but 59 cents in specie.

I shall look with much anxiety for the Address of the Democratic Members to which you refer.

Mr. Voorhees sent me his speech, & I thanked him for it, expressing a strong opinion of its merits. It is, in my judgment, the ablest & most eloquent speech, as you say is generally conceded, which has been delivered during the present Session. Certainly, I have read none that is its equal. He promises to be the coming man in Congress, should his personal character be equal to his great abilities. How is this?

I heartily concur in the high opinion you express of Governor Powell. Without shining abilities, no one can fail to admire the rectitude & firmness of his course amid trying difficulties. His courage is never diverted from the right by fear of consequences. He is a son of whom Kentucky may be justly

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

proud. Besides, he possesses a sound & discriminating judgment, & always speaks ably & to the purpose.

I doubtless wrote the name Bowie by mistake, but I knew that Bowie was the trustee. Mr. Riggs writes that he informs him he cannot sell Leonard's place; because the order of sale directs that a notice of it shall be published in a certain paper in the County of Montgomery & this has been discontinued. The sale must, therefore, be delayed until this shall be remedied by the Court. So says Mr. Bowie to Mr. Riggs.

Miss Hetty is now on a cruise to Philadelphia & Washington. You may see her on her travels. Miss Harriet is now housekeeper & gets along very well. She desires me to present her very kindest regards to you.

Present my most friendly respects to Doctor Jones, & believe me to be ever your sincere friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

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TO MRS. VIELE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

2 May 1864.

MY DEAR MADAM/

I must crave a thousand pardons for not having complied with your request & sent you my autograph, with a sentiment for your Album. I need not assign the reasons for this omission; but if you should think it proceeded from want of respect for yourself, you would be greatly in error. On the contrary, although I have never enjoyed the pleasure of your acquaintance, yet from what I have learned of your character & intellectual accomplishments, I should be proud to hold a place in your personal esteem.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 619.

Congratulating you on the unexampled success of the New York Fair for the relief of our brave & disabled soldiers, to which you yourself have contributed in no small degree, I remain

Yours very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MRS. VIELE.

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TO MR. TOUCEY.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

13 May 1864.

MY DEAR SIR/

It is long since I have heard from you, & I desire to learn that Mrs. Toucey & yourself are as comfortable & happy as my earnest wishes prompt.

During the past winter I have suffered severe attacks of painful rheumatism in both legs. The disease has finally retreated into my right hand & arm, & is now, I trust in God, passing away. I still, however, write with considerable pain.

I earnestly desire that you could be with me for a few days. The publication which I propose to make has for some time been substantially, I may almost say literally, prepared. I think the simple statement of facts in their natural order affords a conclusive vindication of our administration for the last four months of its duration. The preface contains a historical sketch of the rise & progress of abolition, of the Charleston Convention, of the Peace Convention, &c. &c. I have had no person to assist me in its preparation, to make suggestions, or even to verify the facts, though these are mostly official. Stanton & Holt have deserted, & Black, though true, has fought shy. He is a peculiar man; but you know him as well as I do.

At the first he proposed to write a history of my whole administration & seemed delighted with the undertaking. After every preliminary had been arranged he delayed & finally declined

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Extracts printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 620.

to proceed. This cast the whole burden upon myself, for discovering his unwillingness I have ceased to consult him on the subject. Now, my dear Sir, if I could re-examine the work & with your assistance give it the last finishing touch, this might be a means of correcting any errors & doing yourself more ample justice. The season is delightful; & why cannot Mrs. Toucey & yourself pay us a visit? Did we part at Washington, never again to enjoy the society of each other? I trust in God not.

In regard to General Cass's resignation, I had a singular conversation with Judge Black. I stated to him that as I intended to mention his name in connection with this subject I desired to know whether our memory was the same. I then detailed to him the fact that he & Mr. Thompson reported to me the fact that the General expressed to them a desire to withdraw his resignation, whereupon it became a subject of consultation at a Cabinet Meeting, & I finally decided against this permission. He admitted my statement of what had occurred in the Cabinet to be true; but could not affirm positively that General Cass had made such a request to him. He then hesitated, & said he could tell me what had occurred between him & the General immediately afterwards; *but I must receive it in strict confidence*. I replied that I could not so receive it, & gave my reasons, & there the matter ended.

The Judge, notwithstanding all this, is perfectly true to our administration. He talks very openly & without disguise against the present administration, & before our last Gubernatorial election made a speech of greater severity & power against Lincoln (& published it) than any delivered throughout the Campaign. He & his family visit me occasionally & he is just as agreeable as ever. His practice in the Supreme Court has been very lucrative & he is now becoming a rich man.

Miss Lane unites with me in cordial regards to Mrs. Toucey, & expresses an ardent hope that you may both pay us a visit.

From your friend always

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: ISAAC TOUCEY.

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FROM MR. TOUCEY.<sup>1</sup>

[May 25, 1864.]

MY DEAR SIR:

I was very happy to receive your letter of the 13th inst. It gave me information which I had long been wishing to obtain. Let me rejoice with you that you have regained your accustomed power of locomotion without the discomfort of bodily pain. I think the time has come when the history of the last four months of your eventful Administration may be given to the public with good results. Mrs. Toucey's health is so delicate & precarious, that I fear we shall not be able to accept your kind invitation, for which we are very grateful to you & to Miss Lane. Still, I trust that we shall meet again & enjoy the opportunity of conferring together upon the events of the last seven years, so interesting to us all. It will be my greatest pleasure to contribute anything in my power to the history you have in hand, although I think you need no aid from any quarter; & as to giving "the last finishing touches," that is what you have always been accustomed to do yourself, & while I appreciate your kindness, it would be absurd for me to think of aiding Praxiteles to give the finishing polish to his work. I send you herewith a printed copy of my testimony before the Senate Committee which embraces all the facts with regard to Norfolk, Pensacola, & incidentally the Home Squadron. The testimony was divided into two parts by the Committee for their convenience. The note appended to it is strictly correct; & in three lines answers the grossly false accusation that the navy was sent abroad in the interest of secession. The truth is, the Squadrons at the different foreign stations were all of them very small, had not been augmented in proportion to the increase of our commerce, & none of them could be diminished without sacrificing its safety & the interests & safety of those engaged in it. It is not, I suppose, now, treason to say "Blessed are the peacemakers." It was the cardinal point of your policy to preserve the peace of the country, & thereby most surely preserve the Union of these States on the existing basis of the Constitution; & it would have been a most startling departure from that policy to have recalled our foreign Squadrons, & thus with lunatic rashness defeat it at the outset, & precipitate at once the wretched consequences which have since followed its abandonment, to the utter ruin of the country. I thank God that we can wash our hands of any such criminality. There is one fact which has never transpired—which at the time was shrouded in the greatest secrecy—which was not communicated to any of my colleagues in the Cabinet—which rested with the late gallant Commander Ward, a friend of mine from his youth, who fell on the Potomac in the early stage of the war. He was stationed at New York in command of the Receiving Ship. It was arranged with him, that on receiving a telegraphic despatch from me he should in the course of the following night set sail from New York with a

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 620.

force of small vessels & relieve the garrison of Fort Sumter, entering the harbor in the night & anchoring if possible under the guns of the Fort. He sought the desperate enterprise with the greatest enthusiasm, & was willing to sacrifice his life, saying that the sacrifice would be the best inheritance he could leave to his wife & children. He left Washington, after repeated interviews with me, with instructions to select his officers, select & prepare his men on board of the Receiving Ship, & make every preparation which he could make without exciting suspicion, so that he could set sail in a few hours, whenever the emergency should arise. In regard to the wish of Genl. Cass to withdraw his resignation, I knew nothing personally, but remember well that the subject was brought up in Cabinet Meeting, that Judge Black & Mr. Thompson seemed to know all about it, as if they were privy to it, & that after some discussion you deemed it inadmissible. Mr. Stanton & Mr. Holt have left us, & where is Genl. Dix? The times are sadly out of joint. I had not supposed it possible that any Administration could in the short space of three years do the work of destruction so effectually. Still, I trust that in the boundless stores of Infinite Mercy there may yet be some deliverance for the country.

Mrs. Toucey unites with me in the kindest regards to yourself & Miss Lane.

I am, my dear Sir, with the highest consideration & regard, always  
Your friend

ISAAC TOUCEY.

HARTFORD, May 25, 1864.

TO EX-PRESIDENT BUCHANAN.

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## TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 20 June 1864.

MY DEAR SIR/

I am always rejoiced to hear that you are still in the enjoyment of a green & happy old age, surrounded by grateful & prosperous children & grandchildren. May this long be the lot from Providence of Mrs. Leiper & yourself!

You inquire for my health, & I am glad to inform you it is as good as I could expect. After suffering much during the past winter and early spring from Rheumatic Gout, I have been for

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 622.



several weeks free from pain, though I still hobble a little in walking.

You inform me you have a good deal to talk to me about when we meet. I hope this may be ere long. I need not assure you how happy I always am to see you.

Your friend Miss Lane desires to be most kindly remembered to you. After passing the whole winter & spring at home, I am glad she has determined to visit the Bedford Springs about the middle of July. Whether I shall accompany her is uncertain. I believe it is natural for old men to be reluctant to leave home. At least, such is my feeling.

What an extraordinary speech Mr. Lincoln has made to the Union Leaguers at Philadelphia! They have promised with a shout to march to the front at his call & shed their blood, if need be, in the cause of their Country. I have no doubt he will afford them the opportunity. Nobody believes they will embrace it. They will still, however, fight the Copperheads at home.

Your friend as ever

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON : GEORGE G. LEIPER.

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## TO MR. LEWIS.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, 24 June 1864.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have received your favor with a card of invitation to your next Saturday Evening Club; and I regret that I cannot be with you. Age loves home, and this feeling has grown upon me so much that I doubt whether I shall even visit the Bedford Springs during this season.

When I gave you a pressing invitation to visit me last Fall, this was partly selfish. I desired to consult you respecting certain portions of my Record. I had to prepare it without assistance. Two members of my Cabinet are with the Rebels, three with the Republicans, Holt, Stanton, and Dix, Black so

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<sup>1</sup> Konkle's Life of Chief Justice Ellis Lewis, p. 254.

engaged in making money, and I am glad successfully, that he could not spare the time, and Toucey, "the noblest Roman of them all," at such a distance, and he and his wife suffering from feeble health, that I made no requisition upon him. Under these circumstances I wrote to you, not only from a sincere desire to see you but from a wish to consult you about divers legal matters; but I think the record will do as it stands. I would not, if I could roll back the tide of time, change a single fact on which it is founded.

Almost every week I see old friends from different parts of the State and Union who "stop off," on their way to the East, to see me. Such meetings afford me heartfelt pleasure.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: ELLIS LEWIS.

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TO MR. BAKER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 15 July 1864.

MY DEAR SIR/

As the Rebel Raid is over, Miss Lane will leave for the Bedford Springs on Tuesday next, & will go to Huntingdon that evening. She would be very glad if Emily & yourself should accompany her. I desire to go, but have not yet determined.

When will the purchase money for the Pim property be payable? If at the present moment it would not be convenient for me; but still I can borrow.

I learn that Doctor Carpenter & your Uncle Newton are to visit you to-morrow. I do hope you will be able to arrange all affairs.

Your friend as ever

JAMES BUCHANAN.

J. B. BAKER, ESQUIRE.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 622.

TO MISS LANE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, 5 August, 1864.

MY DEAR MISS LANE/

I arrived here this afternoon, baggage all safe, a few minutes after 3 o'clock. I never had so agreeable a ride on a Rail Road car. I would advise you by all means, in returning home, to stay all night at Huntingdon & come by the cars on the next morning. I told Mr. Miller not to give you a feather bed, & I wish you to stay at his house. We parted from Mrs. Pegram, Miss Brent, & Mr. Jackson at Harrisburg—a sorry parting.

I found all things in good order on my arrival. Mrs. Fahnestock is still here & so is Miss Harriet Parker.

Governor Curtin, as you will have perceived, has called for the services of 30,000 volunteers to defend the State against the rebels.

I scarcely know to what ladies to send my love at Bedford, but I wish you to deliver it especially to the ladies who gave me a parting kiss. The fragrance of their lips is as fresh as at the first moment. I hope you & Harriet will behave with all proper respect to your venerable aunt. Remember me most kindly to Mrs. Wade. I hope she will place you under proper restraint, a thing I have never been able to accomplish. Give my best love to Harriet.

I entertain no fears for you at the Springs. It is possible, however, that the Rebels may succeed in cutting the Rail Road track between Huntingdon & Harrisburg,—which would put you to some inconvenience in returning home; but be not alarmed.

Yours affectionately,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

P. S. Don't forget to give my love to Miss Moeler. From a telegram sent by Mr. Scott to Altoona, it would seem he considers that place to be in danger.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection. Imperfectly printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 623.

TO MR. HENRY.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 6 August 1864.

MY DEAR JAMES/

I have received your favor of the 3d Instant & am truly rejoiced to learn that your prospects are so favorable in the Oil Region. Until I read your letter I had supposed your brother Edward was a partner with you; but as you do not mention his name I conclude this is not the case.

The incident which occurred between Governor Curtin & myself was purely personal & not in any degree political. Throughout my life, I have never initiated a quarrel with any person on account of politics, & I have always had warm personal friends among my political opponents. If I could be astonished at any thing from that quarter, it would be at the denial of the Governor that he had visited me at the White House. As more than four years had elapsed, I had determined to do no more at Bedford than to pass him without notice. Very early in the morning as I was passing along the porch there were four gentlemen sitting together. I did not know nor suspect that the Governor was among the number. He rose & rushed towards me with both hands extended to greet me. This was too much to bear from him;—when the incident occurred. I observed no persons around, & concluded I would say nothing about it, nor did I refer to it until after I discovered it was known to the people at the Springs. The less said about it the better.

I passed more than a fortnight very agreeably at the Springs. Miss Lane desired to remain until your father should go to Bedford. I am now sorry I did not bring her & Harriet Buchanan home with me although I do not consider them in any danger at the Springs. What I fear is that the Rail Road may be cut & travel interrupted somewhere between Huntingdon & Harrisburg. Newton Lightner is still at the Springs & I hope they may return with him. The people of Lancaster are in great alarm & are about to remove their valuables.

I had taken the Age from the agent at Lancaster; but finding this more inconvenient than receiving it by mail I enclosed

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Partly printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 623.

\$8.00 to the proprietors & asked them to send it by mail after the 1st July with a receipt. It came. Discovering that they had very properly raised their subscription to \$10, I sent them the two additional dollars & requested them to send the paper to the Bedford Springs. I never received a number there, nor have I heard from them. I confess I do not understand such conduct. Will you inquire into it? This is strange conduct towards myself, especially as I had violated my rule in their favor & contributed \$250 to the fund. But about this you need say nothing.

Yours affectionately

JAMES BUCHANAN.

JAMES BUCHANAN HENRY, ESQUIRE.

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TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 23 August 1864.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor & it affords me great pleasure to learn that Mrs. Leiper & yourself propose to pay us a visit some time after the 1st September. The sooner the better. I need not promise both a cordial welcome. Please write a day or two before so that the carriage may meet you at the Cars.

It did not occur to me that your former letter might have referred to that one which I wrote in favor of Forney's election to the Senate. If it had, I should have spared you some trouble.

Miss Lane returned from the Springs on Friday last, & desires to be kindly remembered to Mrs. Leiper & yourself.

The address of Mr. Lincoln "To whom it may concern" has given a great impulse to the reaction already commenced before its date. I have no doubt he is anxious to correct the blunder; but cannot believe, as the New York Herald's cor-

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 624.

respondent states that he has employed Judge Black to visit Canada for this purpose.

Very respectfully your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: GEORGE G. LEIPER.

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TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, August 25, 1864.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I have received your favors of the 1st and 17th inst., together with a copy of your letter to Mr. Van Dyke as Chairman, all of which I have read with much interest. The meeting of the Chicago Convention is so near at hand that it would be vain to enter into political speculations. The proceedings of this body, whatever they may be, will constitute a new and important era in the history of the Democratic party. From all appearances McClellan will be nominated. Whether for good or for evil time must determine. The platform will present the greatest difficulty. Whilst we are all in favor of peace, it may be too pacific. We ought to commence negotiations with the South and offer them every reasonable guarantee for the security of their rights *within the Union*. If they will accept this and engage to meet us in a general convention of all the States, then I should be in favor of an armistice. A general proposition for peace, and an armistice without reference to the restoration of the Union, would be in fact a recognition of their independence. For this I confess I am far from being prepared.

It is my impression that the South have no idea of making peace without recognition. In this I trust I may be mistaken.

Your article on "swapping horses" is both witty and true, and has afforded us much amusement.

In regard to Miss Lane's coal lands: I think it would be impossible, scattered as the heirs are, and some of them needy,

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 624.



to obtain the consent of all to lease them. It is in the power of any one of them to force a sale by legal proceedings. This was threatened; but has not yet been attempted. In that event, which is highly probable, we ought to be prepared to purchase; and from the nature of law proceedings we shall have sufficient time to be ready. Your services and influence may then become very beneficial. . . . Miss Lane will write to you whenever anything shall occur respecting the lands.

I shall decide when and how I shall publish after seeing the proceedings at Chicago. I cannot think the work deserves to be stereotyped.

Miss Lane desires to be most kindly remembered to you.

My health is as usual. We passed our time very agreeably at the Springs.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

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TO MR. HENRY.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 22 Sep: 1864.

MY DEAR JAMES/

I was very much gratified with your last letter, as I always am to hear good tidings of yourself & your little boy. May God have you both under His holy keeping! I should have written to you more than ten days ago, but for an accident which has caused me much pain & confined me to my room & a great part of the time to bed since last Sunday week. On that evening, whilst taking a walk on the Turnpike, I fell with great force, & the concussion was so violent that on the next day I found myself unable to walk, & for several days I could not stand. I can now walk across the floor, & my strength is gradually returning. In other respects I am well. The Doctor thought that the severe

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 625.

fall might bring back the rheumatism; but it has not done so, except in a slight degree. . . .<sup>1</sup>

No man except General McClellan could have been nominated at Chicago. The Convention was neither more nor less than a ratification meeting of the decree of the people. He would not have been my first choice; but I am satisfied. God grant he may succeed! Peace would be a great, a very great blessing; but it would be purchased at too high a price at the expense of the Union. I have never yet been able to tolerate the idea of Southern recognition.

Mr. Schell will, I think & earnestly hope, accept my invitation to pay us a visit during the present or next month. We should all be glad if you would accompany him; but not at the expense of your important business. . . .<sup>1</sup> Miss Hetty has made apple butter for you, which, in the estimate of those who use such an article, is pronounced excellent. She says, however, that you have forgotten her, as you never write to her as you did formerly. . . .<sup>1</sup>

Miss Harriet & Miss Hetty desire me to present their kindest love to you, & I remain

Yours affectionately,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

J. BUCHANAN HENRY, ESQ.

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## TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND, October 5, 1864.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I have just received your favor of the 3d instant. Whilst I do not concur in opinion with our valued friend, Mr. Sparks, that there is no difference between the Chicago platform and General McClellan's letter of acceptance, I am cordially willing to give him my vote.

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<sup>1</sup> The brief passages here omitted relate to purely private matters.

<sup>2</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 626.

On retiring from the Presidential office, I expressed the determination to follow the example of my Democratic predecessors, and refrain from taking an active part in party politics. Still, I am as much of a Democrat, and as devoted to Democratic principles as I ever have been. Peace, although a great blessing and greatly to be desired, would be too dearly purchased at the expense of the Union, and I, therefore, like the letter of General McClellan.

In answer to your inquiry, I am but slightly, if at all, acquainted with General McClellan. I must certainly have seen him, but have no recollection of his person.

As to the result of the election in this State, I can express no opinion. I hear, from those who visit me, of great changes everywhere in our favor; but it cannot be denied that, since the victories of Farragut, Sherman, and the prospects of General Grant, an impression has been made, more or less extensively, that the Southern States will speedily submit. I wish to God this were true. It is certain, however, that the expectation has gone far to embolden the Republicans. But why speculate? Tuesday next will decide the vote of Pennsylvania at the Presidential election, unless it should be very close.

My record is all ready, but I do not intend to publish until after the Presidential election. The truth which it contains would not make it a very acceptable document, especially to the friends of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, of Squatter Sovereignty, and of those Douglas supporters who broke up the Charleston Convention. It would not be very acceptable to —, nor to —, and that class of politicians.

Miss Lane desires to be most kindly remembered to you, and I remain always,

Very respectfully your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

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TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 26 October 1864.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 18th Instant, & regret to learn from it that Mrs. Leiper & yourself have abandoned the purpose of paying us a visit. I anticipated much pleasure from this visit. I now meet very few who can converse with me from their own knowledge of the distant past & it is always a source of high gratification to meet a friend like yourself, even older than I am, with whom I have ever been on terms of intimacy. We are both at a period of life when it is our duty to relax our grasp on a world fast receding, & fix our thoughts, desires, & affections on one which knows no change. I trust in God that, through the merits & atonement of his Son, we may be both prepared for the inevitable change.

I am truly sorry to learn that you have not been very well. My own health is now good, except some rheumatic feeling in the legs.

I experience with you the desire to stay at home. This comes from old age, & is a merciful dispensation of Providence, repressing the desire to mingle much with the outside world when we are no longer capable of its enjoyments. Peace & tranquillity suit us best.

Though feeling a deep interest in it I speculate but little on the result of the approaching election. When I was behind the scenes I could generally predict the event; but not so now. I confess I was most agreeably surprised that we had carried the Congressional election on the home vote, & now indulge the hope that we may have a majority over the soldiers' vote & all on the 8th November. In this however I do not feel very great confidence.

Please to present my kind regards to Mrs. Leiper & say how sorry I am not to have been able to welcome her at Wheatland. I should still insist on your promised visit, but Miss Lane left home yesterday, to stay I know not how long.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON : GEORGE G. LEIPER.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 627.

TO MR. HASSARD.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

8 November 1864.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 31st ultimo, inquiring whether there is any truth in the statement that President Polk, in 1846, had solicited Archbishop Hughes to accept a special mission to Mexico; & I regret that I cannot give this question a very definite answer. I shall cheerfully, however, state all my knowledge on the subject.

There were at this period many Catholic soldiers in the Army of General Taylor on the Rio Grande; & I suggested to President Polk that it was our duty to provide them Chaplains of their own Christian denomination. To this he cheerfully assented. In consequence, I addressed the letter in May, 1846, to which you refer, to Bishop Hughes (not then Archbishop), inviting him to come to Washington. He was then in Baltimore, attending the Provincial Council of Bishops. He immediately came to the State Department, accompanied by Bishop Lorens of Dubuque.

When I communicated to Bishop Hughes the desire of the President to send Catholic Chaplains to the army, & to obtain his advice & assistance to carry this into effect, both Bishops warmly approved the measure. They immediately proceeded to the Jesuits' College in Georgetown to obtain the services of two suitable Army Chaplains. After a few hours they returned, evidently much gratified with their success, & informed me, in enthusiastic terms, that every professor in the College, both old & young, had volunteered to go to the Army. The Bishops however came to the conclusion that it would be more expedient to select the Chaplains from among the priests outside of the College, & accordingly Father McElroy and Father Rey, of the Jesuit Society, were appointed for this arduous & dangerous service. It is due to these pious & good men to say they faithfully & usefully performed their spiritual duties to the soldiers, & with much satisfaction to the administration. One of them,

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 627.

Father Rey, was afterwards murdered by Brigands, near Monterey.

It occurred to the President whilst the Bishop was in Washington, & most probably at an earlier period, that should he consent to visit Mexico, he might render essential services in removing the violent prejudices of the Mexicans, & especially of their influential clergy, which then prevailed against the United States, & thus prepare the way for peace between the two Republics. In this I heartily concurred. Independently of his exalted character as a Dignitary of the Church, I believed him to be one of the ablest & most accomplished & energetic men I had ever known, & that he possessed all the prudence & firmness necessary to render such a mission successful.

The President & the Bishop had several conversations on this subject; but at none of these was I present. I have not the least doubt, however, from what I heard the President say, that this mission was offered to him & that he declined it.

The President, much as he desired to avail himself of the Bishop's services, could not at the time offer him anything more acceptable. He could not appoint a new Envoy to the Mexican Government so soon after they had refused, in an insulting manner, to receive our former minister. Paredes was, at that time, the Revolutionary President of Mexico. He owed his elevation to his extreme & violent hostility to the Government & people of the United States. Besides, his army had just commenced the war by crossing the Rio Grande & attacking a Detachment of our Troops.

Yours very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MR. JOHN R. G. HASSARD.

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TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 21 November 1864.

MY DEAR SIR/

From your last letter I incline to believe that you bear our defeat with Christian fortitude. Your preceding letter was written with such glowing confidence & joyful hope, that Miss Lane & myself had some amusement over it, as we had no expectation of General McClellan's election from the beginning, most ardently as we desired it. If one seriously asks himself the question, in what condition would the Democratic party be, with all the terrible difficulties & embarrassments surrounding it, had it been successful, he will find grounds for consolation in defeat. It has shown its strength & has performed its duty, & can well afford to bide its time; meanwhile it will be a watchful guardian over the Constitution.

Now would be the time for conciliation on the part of Mr. Lincoln. A frank & manly offer to the Confederates that they might return to the Union just as they were before they left it, leaving the slavery question to settle itself, might possibly be accepted. Should they return, he would have the glory of accomplishing the object of the war against the most formidable rebellion which has ever existed. He ought to desire nothing more.

In that event the exasperated feelings of mutual hate would soon subside. If the parties would not love each other, they must entertain greater mutual respect for one another than ever existed before. There would be no new collision between them for a hundred years. The Republicans in this part of the world are not exultant. They have won the elephant; & they will find difficulty in deciding what to do with him.

I feel some pity for Stanton on his sick bed. I have no doubt of his personal integrity, & that his acceptance of the Department has been a great pecuniary loss to him. He has served Lincoln faithfully, if not very ably or discreetly, & yet the Republicans themselves do not speak well of him.

Holt seems to have gone under. At least we hear no more

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Printed, with omissions, in Curtis's *Buchanan*, II. 629.

of him. He is a much abler man than Stanton, though not so good a man.

I rarely see & but seldom hear of Judge Black. I presume he must now be in Washington. He must be getting very rich.

I very seldom hear from Mr. Toucey. He is a gentleman of the old school, full of principle & honor.

I have not the least feeling against our good friend Flinn on account of *that Resolution*, but esteem him as highly as ever. I am convinced he had no part in it. It was altogether à la Florence.

Miss Lane has been at her Uncle Edward's for several weeks & will not be home till the beginning of December, & then Buch Henry will accompany her. In the meantime Miss Annie Buchanan, a very intelligent & agreeable girl, is staying with me. She, as well as Miss Hetty, desires to be kindly remembered. We all wish you would spend the Christmas Holidays with us.

Remember me kindly to Dr. Jones & Mr. Carlisle. Had the latter accepted the position in the Cabinet which I offered, I should have had one ex-member of it both able & willing to render me valuable assistance, & this he could have done with very little loss of time.

Your letters are always highly acceptable, & I shall ever remain most sincerely your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

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### TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, December 28, 1864.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I have received your favor of Christmas day, and cordially return you my best wishes for your health, prosperity and happiness. I agree in opinion with General McClellan, that it is

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 630.

fortunate both for himself and the Democratic party that he was not elected. But I consider the defeat of Governor Seymour as most unfortunate. But doctors will differ.

Miss Lane received your favor respecting the coal lands in Philadelphia, but she is now at home. These consist of about 2,300 acres, situate in Broad Top Township, Bedford County, near the railroad connecting the Pennsylvania Railroad at Huntingdon, with the mines. This road is in full operation, and over it there is now conveyed large quantities of excellent coal to market. I have no doubt of the great value of these lands, though they have not been further explored than to ascertain there is abundance of coal in them. Miss Lane's interest in them is about one-eleventh, and she is entirely opposed to their sale, but I have no doubt this will be forced by some of her co-heirs. As yet she has received no notice of the institution of proceedings for this purpose, but is expecting it daily. The parties to whom you refer ought to examine the lands, for there is not a doubt they will be sold in the spring.

Miss Lane desires to be kindly remembered to you.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

P. S. My health has been good for several months.

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1865.

TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 24 February 1865.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 21st Instant, & rejoice to learn that your health has so much improved. I trust that the genial air of the Spring & the active exercise to which you

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 633.

have been all your life accustomed may restore you once more to perfect health. Thank God! my own health has been good thus far throughout the severe & inclement winter.

I duly received your letter of the 17th January & have been under the impression it was answered. I have often since thought of the description which you gave of your happy Christmas meeting with your children & grandchildren under the old paternal roof, & what heartfelt satisfaction it must have afforded to Mrs. Leiper & yourself. I trust that several more such family reunions may be in reserve for you; though we have both attained an age when we cannot expect much time in this world, & when we ought to be preparing to meet our God in peace.

I had not learned until the receipt of your last that Mr. Lincoln had joined the Church. Let us hope, in Christian charity, that this act was done in sincerity. The old Presbyterian Church is not now what it was in former years. The last General Assembly has thoroughly abolitionized it.

I confess I was much gratified at the capture of Charleston. This city was the nest of all our troubles. For more than a quarter of a century the people were disunionists, & during this whole period have been persistently engaged in inoculating the other Slave States with their virus. Alas! for poor Virginia, who has suffered so much, & who was so reluctantly dragged into their support.

Miss Lane is now on a visit to Mrs. Berghmans (the daughter of Charles Macalester) in Washington City.

From your friend *always*

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: GEORGE G. LEIPER.

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FROM MR. FLINN.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON CITY, April 15, 1865.

MY DEAR SIR:

I regret to inform you that last night in a private box at "Ford's Theatre," on Tenth Street, President Lincoln was shot through the head by an assassin. He died this morning in a private house opposite the Theatre. The enclosed number of the National Intelligencer will impart to you the particulars of this sad tragedy.

About the same hour, Mr. Seward, Secretary of State, his son, and attendants were assassinated in his room, where he lay disabled by a broken arm and weak by severe affliction. I heard this morning from a gentleman who saw one of the Physicians attending young Seward that he cannot survive the wounds.

Last night and to-day the streets and corners are thick with citizens and strangers expressing their wrath and vengeance upon the assassins. All places of business are closed, and most every place, public and private, festooned in mourning.

I hear the funeral of the President will be next Thursday. Chief Justice Chase administered the oath of office to Vice President Johnson this morning. During your absence as Minister at St. James I boarded with Mr. Johnson at the U. S. Hotel. Several times I copied letters and resolutions for him, as his education is somewhat limited. He was a Breckinridge Democrat. I know since he sat in Congress and introduced his homestead law policy he has been ambitious. At the time Hon. Wm. R. King was nominated for Vice President in 1852, Mr. Johnson expected the nomination, and by his looks and expressions in conversation manifested his disappointment. I hope he may abandon fanaticism and devote himself to restoring the Union.

Permit me to suggest that you write a few lines on the death of Mr. Lincoln, which will soothe the bitter prejudices of the extremists of the Lincoln party against you and your friends. Several of your friends have expressed this wish.

With my best respects to Miss Lane, I am,

Very respectfully, your friend as ever,

WM. FLINN,  
260 F St.

HON. JAMES BUCHANAN.

P. S. If you mailed the bond and mortgage, it has not reached me.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

TO MR. FLINN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

18 April 1865.

MY DEAR SIR/

I was much astonished to learn from yours of the 17th that you had not received the Bond & Mortgage. At least ten days before the 1st April, I enclosed the Bond & Mortgage to you with a regular Power of Attorney duly stamped & acknowledged, authorizing the Recorder of Deeds of Alleghany County to enter satisfaction on the Record. My letter enclosing these papers was placed in the Post Office at Lancaster on the day after its date by a friend who happened to be at Wheatland, & the postage was paid. What can have become of it I cannot conjecture. It must have gone astray, as many letters do. Should it not soon turn up, I shall send another Power to enter satisfaction. Not knowing the name of the Recorder, I gave the Power to him by his Official Title, which is sufficient. Should it prove to be necessary to have a new Power, please to state his name.

I thank you for the information relative to the assassination of President Lincoln, though I had received the news of this deplorable event before it came to hand. The ways of Divine Providence are inscrutable; & it is the duty of poor, frail man, whether he will or not, to submit to His mysterious dispensations.

The war—the necessary war, forced upon us by the madness of the rebels—we all fondly hoped was drawing to a triumphant conclusion in the restoration of the Union with a return of friendly relations among all the States, under the auspices of Mr. Lincoln. At such a moment the terrible crime was committed, which hurried him to eternity; & God only knows what may be the direful consequences. I deeply mourn his loss from private feelings, but still more deeply for the sake of the Country. Heaven, I trust, will not suffer the perpetrators of the deed & their guilty accomplices to escape just punishment.

But we must not despair of the Republic. I have known President Johnson for many years. Indeed, he once honored me with a visit at Wheatland. That he has risen from an humble

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 634.



station to the highest political position of the Union is evidence both of his ability & his merits. He is (certainly he used to be) a man of sound judgment, excellent common sense, & devoted to the elevation & welfare of the people. I wish him success, with all my heart, in performing the arduous & responsible duties which have been cast upon him. I shall judge him fairly, as I have ever done his lamented predecessor; though my opinions may be of little importance. I hope he may exercise his own good judgment, first weighing the counsels of his advisers carefully, as was ever the practice of the first & greatest of our Presidents, before the adoption of any decided resolution. The feelings naturally springing from the horrid deed ought first to have a few days to subside, before a final committal of the new administration to any fixed policy.

I have weighed your suggestion with care; but regret to say I cannot agree with you. Such an act would be misrepresented.

With my kind regards to Mrs. Flinn I remain always your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

WILLIAM FLINN, ESQ.

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TO MR. WALL.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 27 April, 1865.

MY DEAR SIR/

Upon a re-perusal of your letter of the 30th ultimo, I consider it my duty to furnish a specific denial of the statement, by whomsoever made, that I refused you the mission to Rome "because of a doubt as to the genuineness of your Democracy." Any such statement is without the least foundation. Indeed, according to my best recollection, those who professed to be the friends both of yourself and of Mr. Stockton never intimated a

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 635.

suspicion either of your Democracy or your ability. On the contrary, they expressed much anxiety that you should be the Democratic candidate for Congress in your District.

Permit me to observe, as your father's friend and as your own, (if you will allow me so to be,) that I regretted very much the tone & manner in which you say that "the Republicans will sweep the State of New Jersey next Fall." You ought to recollect that the life of a public man under this & indeed under all popular governments is exposed to many vicissitudes. For this, whilst ever keeping steadily in view a sacred regard for principle, he ought to be prepared. His true policy is to "bide his time," & if injustice has been done him, it is morally certain that the people will in the long run repair it. Indeed, this very injustice, if borne with discreet moderation & firmness, often proves the cause of his eventual triumph. Do not mar your future prospects by hasty actions or expressions which may be employed to your injury. Still believe "there's a better day a-coming," & prepare the way for it.

I was 74 on Sunday last, & considering my advanced age, I enjoy good health as well as a tranquil spirit.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. JAMES W. WALL.

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### TO MR. KING.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, April 27th, 1865.

MY DEAR SIR,

Rest assured that I was much gratified to receive your favor of the 22nd. If I was indebted a letter to you, I am sorry for it; because I entertain no other feeling towards you but that of kindness and friendship.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 636.

In common with you, I feel the assassination of President Lincoln to be a terrible misfortune to our country. May God, in his mercy, ward from us the evils which it portends, and bring good out of this fearful calamity. My intercourse with our deceased President, both on his visit to me after his arrival in Washington, and on the day of his first inauguration, convinced me that he was a man of a kindly and benevolent heart and of plain, sincere and frank manners. I have never since changed my opinion of his character. Indeed, I felt for him much personal regard. Throughout the years of the war, I never faltered in my conviction that it would eventually terminate in the crushing of the Rebellion, and was ever opposed to the recognition of the Confederate Government by any act which even looked in that direction. Believing, always, Secession to be a palpable violation of the Constitution, I considered the acts of Secession to be absolutely void, and that the States were therefore still members, though rebellious members, of the Union.

Having prayed night and morning for . . . <sup>1</sup>

Yours very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON : HORATIO KING.

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TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND 28 April 1865.

MY DEAR SIR/

It is a long time since I have enjoyed the pleasure of hearing from you directly; but this is my own fault, as I am indebted to you a letter. *Of you* I have heard much from Miss Lane, & her representations in regard to yourself are always of a friendly & favorable character.

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<sup>1</sup> The original of this letter is not found. In a copy, from which the foregoing is taken, the page ends at this point, and the rest of the letter is missing.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

I wish I could give you some news which would interest you; but this I cannot do. The assassination of President Lincoln is now the universal theme. It was a terrible & diabolical crime, over which the whole country mourns. And the deed was performed when we had reason to believe he was about to tranquillise & restore the Union & harmonise the States. It will probably prove a sad event for the Rebels. May God, in his infinite mercy, bring good out of evil! I regret that the assassin had not been taken alive & his crime undergone a public Judicial investigation; which might have cast much light on the dreadful event & discovered his aiders & abettors.

I have reason to believe that my Leonard business will soon be brought to a close. The property is situate on or near the road from Washington to Pooleville in Montgomery County, & about two miles from the latter place. Would you be good enough to inform me of the distance from Washington to Pooleville, as well as that to Rockville; & also the point on the Baltimore & Ohio Rail Road from which a person would get off the cars to go to Pooleville, & what distance he would have to travel to reach it.—I have no doubt I shall be able to sell the property advantageously as soon as I can obtain possession. Still, I should much rather Col: Leonard would pay me the sum I have advanced for him through Mr. Riggs.

When may we expect the pleasure of a visit from you? I need not say with what satisfaction we should all welcome you.

I was 74 years of age on Sunday last, & am in good health, thank Providence! considering my advanced age.

Always remember me in the kindest terms to Dr. Jones, & believe me to be ever sincerely your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

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TO MR. COOMBE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 2 May 1865.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 29th ultimo, proposing that I should endow a Professorship in Dickinson College for the education of poor students who do not possess the means of educating themselves. The object is highly praiseworthy; but I regret to say I do not feel myself at liberty to advance \$25,000 for this purpose. Under existing circumstances my charities, including those to relatives who require assistance, are extensive; & the world is greatly mistaken as to the amount of my fortune. Besides, if I should hereafter conclude to endow a Professorship, whilst I highly approve the theological doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church, I could not well prefer a College under its direction to a College of the Presbyterian Church, in which I was born & educated, or to the German Reformed College, in my immediate vicinity, in which I have taken a deep interest ever since its origin at Mercersburg, near the place of my nativity.

I might add that Dickinson College, when I was a student, was not conducted in such a manner as to inspire me with any high degree of gratitude for the education I received from my "*Alma Mater*." This was after the death of Dr. Nesbit & before a new President had been elected. I am truly happy to believe that it is now well & ably conducted under the auspices of a Christian Church founded by John Wesley, whose character I have ever held in high veneration, & whose sermons I have read over & over again with great interest.

Yours very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

REV: P. COOMBE.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 636.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK  
"EVENING POST."<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 11 May, 1865.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK EVENING POST.

SIR: In the New York Tribune of yesterday, I read, with no little surprise, an Extract from the Evening Post, (which I do not see,) stating in substance that the Cincinnati Democratic Convention of June, 1856, (not "May") had come to "a dead lock" on the evening before Mr. Buchanan's nomination, & had adjourned until the next morning, "with a fair prospect that it would meet only to adjourn *sine die*; but that in the meantime arrangements were made to secure his nomination as soon as the Convention should reassemble, in consequence of pledges given by his friends. The nature of these pledges, according to the article in the Post, was openly avowed by Judge Black on the floor of the Convention immediately after nomination had been made. According to it: "A silence ensued for a few moments, as if the Convention was anticipating something prepared, when Judge Black of Pennsylvania (afterwards Attorney General under Buchanan) rose in his place and made a set speech, in which he proceeded to denounce 'Abolitionism' & 'Black Republicanism' very freely, & to argue that the States possessed, under the Constitution, the right of secession. He went further, & told the Convention that if the nominee was elected, & a Black Republican should be elected as his successor, he [Mr. Buchanan] would do nothing to interfere with the exercise of it. This pledge was ample, & was accepted by the Southern leaders."

You will doubtless be astonished to learn that Judge Black, afterwards Mr. Buchanan's Attorney General, by whom this pledge is alleged to have been made, & through whom the evident purpose now is to fasten it upon Mr. Buchanan, *was not a Delegate to the Cincinnati Convention, nor was he within five hundred miles of Cincinnati during its session. Instead of this, he was at the very time performing his high official duties as a Judge of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania.*

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 637.



It may be added that from the date of General Jackson's message of January, 1833, against South Carolina nullification & secession, until that of his own message of December, 1860, & indeed since, no public man has more steadfastly & uniformly opposed these dangerous & suicidal heresies than Mr. Buchanan. Had any person, in or out of the Convention, dared to make a pledge in his behalf on this or any other subject, such an act would have been condemned a few days thereafter by the terms of his letter accepting the nomination. In this, after expressing his thanks for the honor conferred, he says that: "*Deeply sensible of the vast & varied responsibility attached to the station, especially at the present crisis in our affairs, I have carefully refrained from seeking the nomination either by word or deed;*" & this statement is emphatically true.

A few words in regard to the alleged "dead lock" in the Cincinnati Convention at the time of its adjournment on the evening of the 5th June, after fourteen ballots had been taken for a candidate. It appears from its proceedings, as officially published, that on each of these ballotings Mr. Buchanan received a plurality, & on the sixth attained a majority of all the votes of the Convention, but not the required two-thirds. On the 14th & last ballot on that evening, the vote stood 152½ for Buchanan, 75 for Pierce, 63 for Douglas, & 5½ for Cass. This being the state of the case, when the Convention assembled the next morning the New Hampshire Delegation withdrew the name of General Pierce, & the Illinois Delegation withdrew that of Judge Douglas, in obedience to instructions from him by Telegraph on the day before the ballotings had commenced. After this the nomination of Mr. Buchanan seemed to be a matter of course. He had never heard of "a dead lock" in the Convention, or anything like it, until he read the article in the Post.

It may be proper to state that Col: Samuel W. Black of Pittsburgh was a Delegate to the Cincinnati Convention from Pennsylvania, & being well known as a ready & eloquent speaker, "shouts were raised" in the Convention for a speech from him immediately after the nomination was announced. To these he briefly responded in an able & enthusiastic manner. From the identity of their surnames, had this response, reported with the proceedings, contained the infamous pledge attributed to Judge Black, or anything like it, we might in charity have inferred that the

author of the article had merely mistaken the one name for the other. But there is nothing in what Col: Black said which affords the least color for any such mistake.

Col: Black afterwards sealed his hostility to secession with his blood. At an early stage of the war he fell mortally wounded on the field of battle, whilst gallantly leading on his regiment against the Rebels.

I doubt not you will cheerfully do me justice by publishing this letter; & I would thank you for a copy of the Paper.

Yours very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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TO MR. GREELEY.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 13 May 1865.

DEAR SIR/

I send you the enclosed with a request that it may be published in the Tribune. With this I know you will comply, from your disposition, which I have often remarked, to afford to those who differ in opinion from you a fair hearing.

Yours very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HORACE GREELEY, ESQUIRE.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. See the letter of May 13, 1865, to Mr. Capen, also that of May 23, 1865, to Mr. Greeley, *infra*.

TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, May 13, 1865.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I have received your note of the 11th, with the slip from the Boston paper not named. The astounding answer to it is, that Judge Black was not a delegate to the Cincinnati Convention, was not within five hundred miles of Cincinnati during its session, but was at the time performing his duties on the Bench, as Judge of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. Although convinced that he was not present, in order to make assurance doubly sure, I sent him a telegram on the subject. His answer is as follows: "I was *not* at Cincinnati in 1856, or at any other time in my life. I was not a member of, or an attendant upon the Democratic Convention." This is a clincher.

When I saw the article from the New York *Evening Post* in the New York *Tribune*, I addressed a letter to the editor, and fearing he might be unwilling to publish such a damning condemnation of his article, *à la mode* ——— of Boston, I sent a duplicate to the *Tribune*.

I forwarded your note with the enclosure to Judge Black, but, like Gallio, he cares for none of these matters.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

TO MR. GREELEY.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, May 23, 1865.

SIR:—

In courtesy I ought to thank you, as I do sincerely, for your offered use of the *Tribune* for "any explanation, comment, or disclaimer" of the acts of my administration during the last six

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 639.

months of its existence. This kind offer should be cordially accepted, but, admonished by advancing years, of which you give me warning, I some time since compiled a history of it during this period, chiefly from the proceedings of Congress and other official and reliable documents, too long for publication in the *Tribune*. This has not been published hitherto, because of my reluctance, for several reasons, to obtrude myself upon public attention during the prosecution of the war, now happily terminated, in the suppression of the rebellion.

Though we have been "life-long" political opponents, as you truly observe, I have for many years been a constant reader of the *Tribune*. This I have done to obtain a knowledge of the principles and policy of the Republican party, from their ablest and most influential expounder; and one who, whilst contending against political opponents, has had the courage and candor to present to the public the Democratic propositions and principles he assailed. I would, therefore, put it to yourself, whether it was quite compatible with this character to assume that my contradiction of an article in another journal, relating to matters of fact, dating as far back as the Cincinnati Convention of June, 1856, had been intended as a defence of the acts of an administration which did not come into existence until nine months afterward; and thereupon to pronounce the conclusion "that Mr. Buchanan's letter has not vindicated Mr. Buchanan's career." Mr. Buchanan has carefully refrained, for four long years, from any attempt to vindicate his "career" as President, except so far as this was forced upon him in his controversy with General Scott, and this course he shall still continue to pursue, until the publication of his historical sketch.

Indeed, his recent letter to the editor of the New York *Post* would never have been written had the editor republished from his files the old article, as published nearly nine years before (though never known to Mr. B. until a few days ago), with any comments he might have thought proper. That of which Mr. Buchanan now complains is that the new article, though ostensibly based upon the old, presents a statement of facts essentially different, in a most important particular, from the original; and this, too, with the evident object of injuring his character. This change consists in substituting for the name of Colonel Black, who *was* a delegate to the Cincinnati Convention, that of Judge

Black, who *was not*; and, at the same time, referring to the fact that "the Judge was afterward Attorney General under Mr. Buchanan." Whence this radical change, if not to bring home to Mr. Buchanan a complicity in the infamous pledge which the last article falsely, but in express terms, attributes to Judge Black? Had the facts stated in this article, on the authority of the editor of the *Post*, remained without contradiction, they would have been taken for granted by the public, to the lasting and serious injury to the reputation both of Judge Black and Mr. Buchanan.

It is but justice to the reputation of a brave and lamented officer to repeat that, in his ardent and impassioned remarks before the convention, evidently without previous preparation, there is not the least color for attributing to Colonel Black a pledge which would have been a serious imputation upon the fair fame of a man who was without fear and without reproach.

Yours very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HORACE GREELEY, ESQ.,

Editor of the New York "Tribune."

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TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 19 June 1865.

MY DEAR SIR/

I was glad to perceive from the Jeffersonian that you were well enough to preside & to speak at your late Democratic County Meeting. From the tenor of your last letter I was fearful you would not be able to perform this duty. I am truly thankful that I was mistaken. Our thread of life is already so long that the Fates cannot have much of it in reserve. May God grant that we shall both be ready to welcome our Saviour at His coming, whensoever He may arrive.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 641.

Thank Heaven! we have lived to witness the return of peace. I do not pretend to speculate on the future course of President Johnson. Of the past there can be no doubt. Until the close of my administration no man had a better Democratic record, unless we may except his effort to give away the public Lands to actual settlers. With this exception I received his uniform support.

My health is wonderfully good, considering my age. It has been so for the last six months; but I make no calculation for the future.

I am happy to perceive that you are living over your life in your grandchildren. This is a source of enjoyment which I do not possess; yet I congratulate you upon it with all my heart. May they all be as prosperous & happy as your heart can desire!

Miss Lane desires me to present her affectionate regards to you.

From your friend as ever

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: GEORGE G. LEIPER.

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TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 25 July 1865.

MY DEAR SIR/

I duly received your favor of the 1st, & very much regret I shall not enjoy the pleasure of meeting you at the Bedford Springs. I am prevented from going there myself; because the proof sheets of my book are arriving & I must remain at home to correct them.—I have received the National Intelligencer's receipt.

I was glad to learn your favorable opinion of the President. During my acquaintance with him he was a radical Democrat of the Jefferson & Jackson School. He & I separated from the Southern leaders in December, 1860, & we both incurred their

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



abuse. Jefferson Davis treated him harshly in the Senate, as he did myself. The fifth Harry of England has been celebrated ever since his day for not resenting, as King, insults which he had received as Prince of Wales. I trust President Johnson may not try Davis by a Military Commission; and that he may not much longer delay his trial. I should have great confidence in him but for his surroundings. The firmness of any man, unless he possessed the nerve of Old Hickory, might yield to incessant importunity. Still, I know him to be firm & resolute. With old Mr. Blair for adviser & Forney for organ, especially the latter, it will be difficult for him to secure the confidence of the Democracy of Pennsylvania. Thank God! we now enjoy peace. Why does he not at once put an end to arbitrary arrests & Military Courts?

Should you not go to Bedford, I hope you may be able to run on here for recreation. The air of Washington cannot be very salubrious at this season of the year. I need not say how happy Miss Lane & myself would be to see you. We are all well, thank God!

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

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### TO MR. TOUCEY.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 3 August, 1865.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 29 ultimo, with the accompanying communication. It is too late to make use of them in my book, the manuscript of which is now in the hands of the Appletons; & I am from week to week receiving the proofs, but not in such quantities as I could desire. They publish it at their

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 641.

own risk, & are stereotyping it. From present appearances, it will not be published for a month or six weeks. Still, when I wrote it, your testimony before the Committee was in my possession; & I think you will say I have made good use of it.

I have heard that the Legislature of Connecticut have restored your portrait & that of Governor Seymour to their appropriate place among the Governors. Is this true? It was a shameful act to have removed them.

Judge Black was here a few days ago. He informs me that Mr. & Mrs. [Jacob] Thompson left Halifax for France on the steamer some weeks ago, & that the money deposited by him in Canada belonged to himself. It is well for him he has made his escape. . . . <sup>1</sup>

My health is very good, considering my age. I lead a tranquil & contented life, free from self-reproach for any of the acts of my administration. How much I wish to see Mrs. Toucey & yourself! Miss Lane desires to be most kindly remembered to both. Please to present my warmest regards to her, & remember me kindly to Governor Seymour.

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. ISAAC TOUCEY.

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### TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND 2 September 1865.

MY DEAR SIR/

Some weeks have elapsed since the receipt of your last favor. This should have been answered sooner, but I had nothing of the least importance to write. Still, it is my ardent desire by correspondence to keep the chain of friendship bright which has bound us together for so many years. If writing should too much fatigue you, I am glad you have dear ones around you who

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<sup>1</sup> The passage here omitted is purely personal.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

can relieve you from the task. I shall always be happy to learn that you are tranquilly & peacefully descending the down hill of life.

I am glad to learn that your granddaughter is about to be married to a gentleman so well worthy of her. The prosperity of your descendants must be a source of heart-felt comfort to you,—a pleasure denied to me.

The manuscript of my Book has been in the hands of the Messrs. Appleton of New York for several weeks past; but they proceed slowly with the printing & stereotyping. It will, I think, appear soon after the first of October. They have undertaken the task at their own risk, this being their own offer. It will doubtless be severely criticised; but all the facts stated are sustained by official reports & other undeniable testimony.

Miss Lane desires to be most kindly remembered to you.

From your friend as ever

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON : GEORGE G. LEIPER.

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TO MR. TOUCEY.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,  
15 September 1865.

MY DEAR SIR/

I write for information which I would thank you to furnish with as little delay as may be convenient. You will recollect that the Brooklyn was prepared & ready to go to sea with reinforcements & provisions for Fort Sumter. General Scott had the orders in his pocket for this purpose from Mr. Holt & yourself. A delay occurred, & in the mean time General Scott became convinced that it would be better to send the "Star of the West," which was accordingly done to satisfy him & you both.

The question is, who convinced him of the expedience of this

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

change? I have said in my Book that I understood it was Mr. Fox, the present assistant Secretary of the Navy. Am I correct? I never doubted it until I read the first part of his article in the *World* entitled "Memorandum of facts concerning the attempt to send supplies to Fort Sumter in 1861." If Fox were not the person who persuaded the General to prefer the *Star of the West* to the *Brooklyn*, who was it? I have but little time to correct the error, if it be one; & therefore please to answer as soon as convenient.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. Toucey, believe me ever to be sincerely & respectfully

Your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.<sup>1</sup>

HON: ISAAC TOUCEY.

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Toucey made the following reply:

HARTFORD, September 18, 1865.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I have received your letter inquiring who persuaded General Scott to take the "*Star of the West*" instead of the "*Brooklyn*," to send reinforcements and provisions to Fort Sumter in 1861. I am not able to answer the question, except by saying that I did not. Who did persuade him to make the change is entirely unknown to me. I always supposed that he was induced to send the "*Star of the West*" by advisers outside of the administration. Of course I cannot answer for Mr. Holt, but I never suspected that he was the author of that measure.

If you can do it without any inconvenience, I should be glad to receive from you a copy of the joint order of Mr. Holt and myself to the Military and Naval Forces at Pensacola, which we issued during the session of the Peace Convention. You may remember that I applied for a copy to Mr. Welles, and he declined to give it. I may have occasion to make some use of it.

Mrs. Toucey unites with me in most respectful and kindest regards to yourself and Miss Lane.

Very truly yours, with the highest respect,

ISAAC TOUCEY.

TO MR. REED.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, September 23, 1865.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have received your favor of the 20th with the Introduction. This I am truly sorry I cannot adopt. It is written in your own polished style, and as a composition is greatly superior to my own Preface. But in several particulars it would not be appropriate to the general tenor of the work. The reason is that our opinions have not coincided in regard to the conduct of the Secessionists in repealing the Missouri Compromise, in seceding, and several other acts. In respect to the conduct of the abolition party from its origin, we in the main agree. It appears from the Book that I would have shed blood in the defence of Fort Sumter had it been attacked during my administration.

Nevertheless, I have already profited by your criticisms. I agree with you entirely respecting the enumeration of the subjects in the conclusion of the Preface. This ought to be omitted, and I have this day written to the Appletons, proposing, if it be not too late, to send them a new Preface with this correction. In preparing it I shall take advantage of the admirable order of your introduction, and shall borrow from it in other particulars. I have already corrected several phrases of the work which you thought too harsh, according to your suggestions.

I am truly sorry to have given you so much trouble; but this you must charge to the account of your friend, in all sincerity,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: WILLIAM B. REED.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

TO MR. KING.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, 5th October, 1865.

MY DEAR SIR,—

I have received your favor of the 26th ultimo with the two copies in pamphlet of Mr. Holt's reply to Montgomery Blair, and, although I had read this before in the newspapers, I received it with pleasure as a token of your friendly regard.

If Mr. Holt had appreciated General Scott as I did upon my first interview with him after I had unfortunately invited him to Washington, he would not have addressed him the letter of the 31st August, 1865, though every fact stated therein, *and more*, is literally true. He ought to have known that the general would not frankly admit them, notwithstanding the preface of praises to his "great name." He ought to have stated the well-known fact, which could not be denied, without any such reference, and thus escaped the evasive and unsatisfactory answer. By the bye, as I was not perfectly certain who the person was that induced General Scott to substitute the *Star of the West* for the *Brooklyn*, then prepared for the occasion, I have not named him in my book.

I know and have long known the Blairs perfectly well, or, rather, old Francis P. Blair, for Montgomery had not the ability to make a respectable advocate of the Government in the Court of Claims. If President Johnson should fall into their hands, which some think probable, I shall not say what I apprehend, though I agree with him on his plan of restoration.

I thought at the time that Mr. Holt's report of the 18th February, coming four days after that of Mr. W. A. Howard, from the select committee, expressed unnecessary alarm. If you have never read this report, especially the long testimony of General Scott, I would advise you to read it as a curiosity. You may find it in vol. ii., "Reports of Committees of the House, 1860-1861, No. 79." I think you will agree with me that the testimony justifies the unanimous conclusion of the committee, a majority of which were Republicans.

I forgot to mention that, according to my best recollection,

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<sup>1</sup>Turning on the Light, by Horatio King, pp. 203-204.



I did not remove Montgomery Blair, but suffered him to remain in office until he should think proper to resign, on account of regard for the memory of Judge Woodbury. I well recollect that I received his apparently cordial thanks for my forbearance. His conduct towards me since is a characteristic of the family. Some day, in passing, you might look whether he did not resign.

I am always glad to hear of the welfare of Annie and her mother; and I hope you will remember me to them with great kindness.

I believe my book will be published in the course of the present month. It has been delayed much longer than I desired or expected.

My own health, thank God! continues remarkably good, considering my age, and I have excluded myself entirely from any part in party politics, still believing, however, in the Democratic creed,—more, if possible, than ever.

Miss Lane desires to be kindly remembered to you.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON : HORATIO KING.

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## TO MISS LANE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, 21 October, 1865.

MY DEAR HARRIET/

I received yours of the 18th yesterday. We will talk the matter over in regard to Wheatland after your return. I believe you say truly that nothing would have induced you to leave me, in good or evil fortune, if I had wished you to remain with me. Such a wish, on my part, would be very selfish. You have long known my desire that you should marry, whenever a suitor worthy of you & possessing your affections should offer. Indeed it has been my strong desire to see you settled in the world

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection. Inaccurately printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 631.

before my death. You have now made your own unbiased choice, & from the character of Mr. Johnston I anticipate for you a happy marriage; because I believe from your own good sense you will conform to your conductor & make him a good & loving wife. Beware of unreasonable delays in the performance of the ceremony, lest these may be attributed to an improper motive.

I have no news to communicate of the least importance; besides I hope to see you by the middle of the next week at the latest.

Blanche and Martha paid me a brief visit yesterday,—better late than never, & so I told them.

Governor Porter was here two days during the present week. He & I began political life nearly together & we can talk over the men & measures of the “auld lang syne” for the last fifty years. His visits are always agreeable to me.

Among your numerous friends you ask only for Punch,<sup>1</sup> & this in the Postscript, which is said to contain the essence of a lady's letter. He is a companion which I shun as much as possible, not being at all to my liking. I believe, however, his health is in a satisfactory condition.

The proceedings of a majority of the Episcopal Convention have afforded me great satisfaction.

If the opportunity should offer, please to remember me with great kindness & respect to Bishop Hopkins. I have no doubt his preaching extempore is excellent.

Give my love to Mrs. Reigart, & be sure you place an indelible mark on *that* stocking. Should I again get the gout, how it will solace the pain!

Miss Hetty desires to be kindly remembered to Maria and yourself. With my love to Maria, I remain,

Yours affectionately,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MISS HARRIET R. LANE.

On the same page as the foregoing letter to Miss Lane, Curtis, in his *Life of Buchanan*, prints the following letter from Dr. Blake to Mr. Buchanan:

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<sup>1</sup> A dog.

HIS EXCELLENCY, JAMES BUCHANAN:—

MY DEAR SIR:—Your favor of the 21st inst. did not reach me until the 23d. On the following day I saw Miss Lane, and had the same pleasure yesterday. I expect to call on her to-morrow in company with some ladies who wish to pay their respects to her on your and her own accounts. She will not require any attention from me, as her reception hours are occupied by the many friends and admirers who visit her. At Mrs. Lincoln's afternoon reception she was the observed of all observers, and she was constantly surrounded by crowds of acquaintances, and persons desirous of being introduced to her. She, I am sure, must be highly gratified by her visit, as nothing has occurred to mar the pleasure of it.

Our city is full of strangers, who have been attracted among us by the approaching inauguration. There is nothing new, and I have nothing of local interest to communicate at this time.

Very truly your friend,

JOHN B. BLAKE.

From this letter, says Curtis, it seems that "Miss Lane was in Washington in October, 1865, at the second inauguration of President Lincoln." This comment is apparently an oversight, due to supposing Dr. Blake's acknowledgment of a letter of the "21st inst." to refer to Mr. Buchanan's letter of October 21. Mr. Curtis was of course aware of the fact that President Lincoln was not alive in October, 1865, and that his second inauguration took place in March of that year.

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## TO MR. FAULKNER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,  
21 October, 1865.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have this moment received your favor of the 19th Instant. Whilst attributing to me patriotic motives for my official acts when President, you express the opinion that I had erred in some of my recommendations & measures of policy. To this, as a reasonable man, I can have no objection, for I may have committed many errors. But when you add that I would probably myself admit such to be the fact, I must say that you are mis-

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 643.

taken. I pursued a settled, consistent line of policy from the beginning to the end; & on reviewing my past conduct, I do not recollect a single important measure which I should desire to recall, even if this were in my power. Under this conviction I have enjoyed a tranquil & cheerful mind, notwithstanding the abuse I have received, in full confidence that my countrymen would eventually do me justice.

I am happy to know that you still continue to be my friend, & I cordially reciprocate your kindly sentiments, wishing that you may long live in health & prosperity.

I thank you for the slip from the National Intelligencer, which I have no doubt contains a correct representation of your conduct whilst Minister in France. I learned from Mr. Magraw the cause of your arrest soon after you had been discharged.

I am happy to say that through God's mercy I enjoy unusual health for a man now in his 75th year.

Miss Lane is not at home, or she would certainly return you her kind remembrances.

Very respectfully your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: C. J. FAULKNER.

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TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,  
23 October 1865.

MY DEAR SIR/

Two or three days ago I received from you cards from your granddaughter Miss Eliza L. Smith & Mr. & Mrs. I. Edward Farnum. I had supposed from your letter of the 4th September that the young couple had been already married, though upon recurring to it I find you do not expressly state the fact. Whether married or to be married, I hope Mr. & Mrs. Farnum may be

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

happy in their union & enjoy long life, health, & prosperity. I shall ever feel a deep interest in the welfare of every member of your family.

I am gratified with President Johnson's plan, not of reconstruction *but of restoration*. The seceded States were never out of the Union in the contemplation of the Constitution, because their secession was a nullity. But a rebellion of individuals within any of them against the execution of the laws could be & ought to be suppressed by the General Government. This has always been my opinion, more than once publicly expressed.

My health, thank God! still continues good, considering my advanced age. I have no news to communicate which would be of the least interest to you, unless it may be that I have become a communicant in the Church of my fathers. This it has for years been my desire to do, & I have only been prevented since I left Washington by the conduct of the Presbyterian Church since the commencement of the war. I hope you have long since done this, in obedience to the dying command of our Lord & Saviour.

With my very best wishes for your present & future welfare, I remain always sincerely

Your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON : GEORGE G. LEIPER.

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TO MR. JACOB.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

28 October 1865.

MY DEAR SIR/

I feel assured you will pardon me for making the request contained in this letter. To you & to your excellent lady, whose death I learned with deep regret, I feel under special obligations for having corrected the misrepresentations made by a political enemy of the interview between Colonel Benton, your venerated

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

father-in-law, & myself on the evening preceding his death (9th April, 1858).

On revising my papers, I cannot find the publication made by yourself, nor that which called it forth, relating to this interview, & am anxious to obtain copies of them. Will you be so kind as to furnish me with these copies, or refer me to where they may be found? I shall ever feel deeply grateful for the noble & independent vindication of truth published so opportunely by yourself, on information derived from your lady, who was in the room on this mournful occasion. The kind & affectionate sentiments then expressed by the dying statesman towards myself will forever remain engraven on my memory.

I have watched with anxious interest the persecutions to which you have been exposed during the last dreary years, & rejoice that you have met and overcome them with so much courage & success.

I now enjoy good health, considering that I am in my 75th year; & am blessed in my retirement by a kind Providence with a contented & tranquil spirit.

Your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.<sup>1</sup>

LIEUT. GOVERNOR JACOB.

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<sup>1</sup>With regard to the foregoing letter, it may be explained that in a public statement attributed to Mr. Blair, Senior, it was represented that Colonel Benton had, when on his deathbed, declared to him, in "energetic whispers, that the same men who had sought to destroy the republic in 1850 were at the bottom of this accursed Lecompton business," and had "warmly praised the intrepid and incorruptible Douglas Democrats who had resisted the power and wiles of a corrupt and deluded administration." The accuracy of this statement was denied by Mr. William Carey Jones, who, with his wife, a daughter of Colonel Benton, was present during Mr. Blair's visit. The interview with President Buchanan, as described by Governor Jacob, was of the most friendly character. Colonel Benton is represented as having said: "Buchanan, we are friends; we have differed on many points, as you well know, but I always trusted in your integrity of purpose. I supported you in preference to Fremont, because he headed a sectional party, whose success would have been the signal for disunion. I have known you long, and I knew you would honestly endeavor to do right. I have that faith in you now, but you must look to a higher power to support and guide you." (King's Turning on the Light, 243-250.) See letter of Mr. Buchanan to Mr. King, April 21, 1866, *infra*.



TO MR. MARBLE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

4 November, 1865.

DEAR SIR/

I have received, through your favor of the 29th ultimo, the invitation of the Managing Committee to become an honorary member of the Manhattan Club; and I cheerfully & gratefully accept this token of their regard.

It is proper I should thank the Committee for their kind recognition of my long services in the cause of Democracy. Convinced that its principles spring from the very essence of the Constitution, I know they can never die whilst this shall survive. All that is required to render them again triumphant, as they were in the days of Jefferson and Jackson, is that the party, without concealment or reserve, shall, as then, with unity of spirit, persistently present & uphold them before the American people in their native truth, simplicity, and grandeur. I am too old to take part in this glorious task, but were I twenty years younger, I should once more devote myself to its accomplishment, firmly believing that this would be the triumph of law, liberty, & order, & would best secure every interest—material, social, & political—of all classes of my countrymen.

Yours very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MANTON MARBLE, ESQUIRE,  
Secretary.

TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND, November 25, 1865.

MY DEAR SIR:—

You will have seen ere this that my little book has been launched on a stormy ocean. I thank God that I have lived to

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 643.

<sup>2</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 644.

perform this duty. It will be severely criticised, but the facts and authorities cited cannot be demolished.

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Miss Lane desires to be most kindly remembered to you.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

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### TO MISS LANE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, 30 Nov: 1865.

MY DEAR HARRIET/

I enclose two letters. That from Mr. Capen I opened, supposing it might require immediate attention; but when I discovered the subject of it, I ceased to read. I go to town to-day, & shall keep this open, so that if other letters should arrive I will enclose them.

I go to York on Saturday, having received a very kind & pressing invitation from the Shunks. Rebecca was ill in bed & that is the reason why I had not heard from them. I have not a word from either Mr. Schell or James Henry. I infer there is nothing encouraging to write about the Book. A strong attempt is making to cry it down in New York; but it will make its own way. No news.

Yours affectionately,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MISS HARRIET R. LANE.

P. S. I have just heard from Mr. Schell.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 632.

1866.

TO MR. JOHNSTON.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, January 6, 1866.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I have received your favor of the 4th, with the deed, which I think has been well and carefully prepared. For this purely voluntary act of your kindness Miss Lane feels herself greatly indebted, and you will please to accept my cordial acknowledgments.

Had I been consulted, I should have preferred that my name had not appeared as a trustee, having determined, at my advanced age, to relieve myself, as far as possible, from all worldly affairs; but, as the chief burden will rest upon your brother Josiah, who is abundantly competent to perform the duty, I shall cheerfully accept the trust. Besides, this will place upon record, for whatever it may be worth, my entire approbation of the marriage.

With sentiments of warm regard, I remain,

Very respectfully your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HENRY E. JOHNSTON, ESQ.

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TO COLONEL BAKER.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND, January 6, 1866.

MY DEAR SIR:—

Miss Lane requests me to invite you in her name to her wedding on Thursday, the 11th inst. The ceremony will be between 12 and 1 o'clock. It is to be a private affair. No cards

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 633. Mr. Johnston was married to Miss Lane at Wheatland, January 11, 1866.

<sup>2</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 633.

of invitation have been issued. I hope you will not fail to countenance us with your presence.

Your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

COL: J. B. BAKER.

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TO MRS. JOHNSTON.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, 18 January, 1866.

MY DEAR MRS. JOHNSTON/

I have received your kind letter but not until Tuesday, when I thought it uncertain whether an answer would reach you at Boston.

I am much gratified with its tone and think you have embarked on the sea of matrimony with a fair prospect that the voyage may be happy. This will, in a great measure, as I have often told you, depend upon yourself. I hope you may perform your domestic duties with as much dignity and propriety as you have manifested in your quasi public life. I long to see you an affectionate wife & an exemplary matron. You are now . . .<sup>2</sup> and have experienced enough of the life of the world to conclude that most of it is vanity & vexation of spirit. I trust you have heart & sense enough to be happy in your new condition. You will find it far better to a well-balanced mind than the flash and excitement produced by the admiration & flattery of the world. I expect great things from you & trust I may not be disappointed.

The girls are still here & render themselves quite agreeable. . . .<sup>3</sup>

I think the wedding went off properly & prosperously. Every guest was pleased. I almost lost my heart to Emily & Bessy. I liked them very much & I think your association with them will prove highly agreeable. I have but little news to communicate. The Misses Steenman & Mr. & Mrs. Brinton

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 645.

<sup>2</sup> The words here are now undecipherable.

<sup>3</sup> An illegible sentence here follows.

have been here since you left, making anxious inquiries concerning you, which I was able to answer in a manner highly pleasing to myself. Mr. & Mrs. Swarr are about to attend the funeral of Mr. Mellon, their relative, in Philadelphia.

I am rejoiced that Mr. Johnston & Mr. Schell get along so well together. There is [not] now & never has been any reason why they should not. He [Mr. Schell] is certainly one of the excellent of the earth, and there is no man living whom I esteem more highly.

I return you Sir Henry Holland's letter, & I am almost tempted to send him a copy of my Book on your account, as he desires. Still my opinion of his conduct on his last visit to the United States has not changed. Perhaps it was too much to expect from a London Doctor that he would forego the honor of reviewing the army of the Potomac or the society of Thurlow Weed, Miss Rebecca Smith, & Mr. Everett for the sake of visiting an old man at Wheatland who was proscribed by the grand dignitaries of the empire.

We have good sleighing here & have been enjoying it moderately.

With my kindest regards to Mr. Johnston, I remain,

Yours very affectionately,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MRS. HENRY E. JOHNSTON.

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### TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 19 January, 1866.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 16th Instant, and am happy to learn that no "fair one" has come athwart your regard for your old friends. I know that your heart is so expanded that love and friendship will both find suitable quarters in it.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 646.

I shall deliver your very kind message to Mrs. Johnston, but do not expect to see her for a considerable time. She left here with Mr. Johnston on the day of the wedding, & is now, I believe, in New York. When they will go to Baltimore I do not know; but believe that soon after they intend to visit Cuba. I know that Mrs. Johnston would be delighted to receive your felicitations under your own hand. Her address will be Mrs. Henry E. Johnston, No. 79, Monument Street, Baltimore.

I thank you for the offer to send me Mr. De Leon's review, but I do not wish to have it. If there is anything disagreeable in it, *as is doubtless the case*, some person will be sure to send it to me. There is a violent & brutal attack on the Book & on me in Beecher's Independent, & I know not the number of extracts from the Paper containing it which I have received anonymously. The Book is quietly making its own way, under the disadvantage of a very high price. Several thousands have been already sold, & the Appletons inform me the demand is still increasing.

I am truly happy to learn that my good old friend Dr. Jones is so well pleased with the Book. Please to present him my very kindest regards.

Thank you for delivering my message to Mrs. Clay. She is charming, & has behaved beautifully in her trying situation.

When the opportunity offers, please to return my very kindest regards to Mrs. Dr. Houston. She is, indeed, an excellent woman, and I owe her many obligations.

I ought to thank you for the Reports "of the condition of the *National* Metropolitan Bank." In these I observe you have blended specie with other lawful money; but the amount of each you have not designated. These reports have led to a train of reminiscences. The Democratic party, under the lead of General Jackson, put down *one* National Bank as both unconstitutional & inexpedient. There are now more than sixteen hundred such Banks. All over the Country, on account of their enormous profits, these have enlisted great numbers of Democrats as stockholders, & they will constitute the most formidable obstacle to the triumph of the Democratic party. But this event must come sooner or later.—I presume our friend Carlisle did not receive the Book I sent him.

Corcoran, I perceive, has returned to Washington. Of all the absurd things I have encountered in my life, the cause of his



enmity to me is the most absurd. I did him the greatest kindness which I could do to a father and a friend, by causing the lover of his daughter, to whom I was warmly attached, to be sent away quietly, instead of making the case a subject of Diplomatic correspondence with the Spanish Government.

I sat down to write you a few lines, & I have now written an unconscionably long letter.

From your friend as ever

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

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TO MR. BAKER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 7 February 1866.

MY DEAR SIR/

I am happy that our tastes on so many subjects are the same & that we both delight in the classical dish of sauer kraut. Many pretenders to refinement despise this honest German dish; but we know better. I shall, therefore, expect you to be with me at 2 o'clock P.M. on Saturday, to partake of this delightful preparation made in Miss Hetty's best style.

Your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

J. B. BAKER, ESQ.

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FROM MR. KING.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, April 12, 1866.

MY DEAR SIR:

When I received your interesting and kind letter of the 5th Oct. last, I intended to acknowledge its receipt at once, and sought to ascertain whether Montgomery Blair resigned or was removed as Solicitor of the Court of Claims, in order to inform you; but strange to say, the records neither at

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

the State Dept. nor at the Att'y General's office show the fact, nor have I up to this time been able to learn positively what the fact is. I met Mr. Kerr, the present Solicitor, to-day, and in answer to my inquiry he said he thought he resigned; and I doubt not your recollection of the matter is correct. Had I obtained certain information on the point, I should not so long have neglected to answer; and I am really ashamed of my apparent negligence, although I am well aware that my dull letters can possess very little value to any one.

As to Montgomery, you will observe that he is still flourishing. In the Intelligencer of this morning there is an address to the "National Johnson Club," with his name as "President" and that of Charles Mason as "Corresponding Secretary." I have not had time to read it, tho' I intend to do so. I presume Judge Mason wrote it, because he is far the abler of the two, but he has been so hostile to all of my way of thinking throughout the war that I have very little respect for anything he may say. I have not forgotten that immediately after the election of Lincoln and Johnson, in Nov., 1864, he came out with several "addresses," as "Chairman of the Democratic Resident Committee," in one of which he said, "There has been no *honest* decision against us, [the Democracy,] *none to which we could be justly required to submit, were not the consequences of resistance so momentous.*" Since the Presidential election in 1860, I have had little or nothing to do with partizan politics; but I am free to confess that were I to again "fall into line," I should be a very unruly "private" under such "Generals" as Montgomery Blair and Charles Mason.

I ought to have told you that I purchased your Book as soon as it was offered here for sale, and that I read it with great pleasure. The chapters on the occurrences in the closing months of your Administration are thrillingly interesting. It may be pleasant for you to know that I have heard Mr. Holt, also, speak of it several times as admirably written and in a good spirit. My copy has been lent to one and another ever since I read it myself.

I thank you for referring me to Pub. Doc. No. 79, 1860-'61. I procured a copy, and read it with as much interest as ever one read a novel. Indeed, I was so much amused by it that I was induced to write out a sort of synopsis of it, with running remarks, which was afterwards printed in the New York Times as from "our own Correspondent"!! I will enclose a copy, knowing that you do not give so much credit as I feel constrained to do to the belief entertained by a great many people that it was the intention of the conspirators to take possession of this Capital either before or immediately upon your vacating the Presidential Chair. I have had, since the war was over, quite a number of proofs that such was their purpose, having among other facts heard it positively declared that the "National Volunteers" and kindred spirits of this District who left the city soon after the Inauguration of Mr. Lincoln confidently expected to be back here, as among the victors, in the course of a few days. Mr. Wheeler, brother-in-law of Ex-Mayor Lenox, who was one of those who left, assured me that there was no question on this point.

Since writing the above I have been interrupted, and in the meantime have read the Blair-Mason "Address" above referred to, and instead of its

being written by Mason, it is evidently Blair *all over*. In fact, it is little more than a rehash of Blair's Maryland essays, which in the course of the last year he has managed to read before small gatherings in "my State" of Maryland—his real domicile, as you are aware, being on Pennsylvania Avenue opposite the War Department. In this "Address," the two men whose election this "Corresponding Secretary" tho't it would have been the duty of the democracy to resist, "were it not that the consequences of resistance" were "so momentous," are now highly lauded! "How differently felt that *true friend of the Union*, President Lincoln!" they exclaim. Verily, if the people are prepared to follow such leaders, I shall begin to despair of ever again feeling proud of my country.

There is no doubt that the extreme course of Stevens and Sumner has greatly retarded reconstruction. It has stirred up a bad feeling again at the South, and from which it is apparent the President himself is far from free—all which tends to trouble of the gravest character. Had the members from Tennessee been admitted as they ought to have been in the early part of the session, there is good reason to believe that Johnson would have preserved his equanimity of temper, and that the break which now seems nearly complete between him and a very large body of the Union people with whom he has heretofore acted would have been avoided. Nothing is plainer than that our trust for the salvation of the country must be placed in Him alone who hath power to save.

When I last heard from my daughter, she had just returned from a mule ride upon the hot ashes of Mount Vesuvius.

I hope you are still blessed with good health and that you may live to see our whole country again united and happy, so that, continuing in the quiet of Wheatland, you may see and feel that all without, too, is quiet and peaceful.

I am, with great respect,

Very sincerely yours,

HORATIO KING.

HIS EXCELLENCY JAMES BUCHANAN,  
Wheatland.

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## TO MR. KING.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND April 21st 1866.

MY DEAR SIR,

I was happy to receive and peruse your favor of the 12th Instant. I am glad to infer from the mule ride of your daughter on the hot ashes of Mount Vesuvius that she is in excellent

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

health. May she continue hearty and happy for many, very many years!

I am glad to learn your favorable opinion of my book, as well as that of Mr. Holt. As you have loaned your copy away so much, I shall embrace the first opportunity of presenting you another.

I presume from your letter to the New York Times we shall not agree as to the existence of any serious danger to the inauguration of Mr. Lincoln on the 4th of March, 1861. The truth is, when I first heard the reports circulated in the early part of the previous session, I kept my eye upon the subject and had my own means of information. I had no apprehension of danger for some time before the Report of the Committee; but the stake was so vast that I yielded to the members of the Cabinet and ordered the troops to Washington. Virginia was at the time as loyal a State as any in the Union, and the Peace Convention which she originated was still in session. But we need not discuss this question.

I have no doubt that Montgomery Blair resigned; but whether or not is of little importance. I am sorry I have caused you so much trouble about so small an affair.

Whilst with you I should be very unwilling to fall into line under Montgomery Blair as a leader of the Democratic party, yet I know I shall never be condemned to such an ordeal. I am as firm and as true a Democrat of the Jefferson and Jackson school as I have ever been in my life. The principles of Democracy grow out of the Constitution of the United States, and must endure as long as that sacred interest. I firmly believe that the Federal Government can only be successfully administered on these principles; and although I may not live to see it, yet I shall live and die in the hope that the party, purified and refined by severe experience, will yet be triumphant. Whilst these are my opinions, I obtrude them on no person, but like yourself have withdrawn from party politics.

By the bye, I wish to impose on you a task which I do not think will be congenial. Old Mr. Blair attempted to misrepresent the scene between Col: Benton and myself on the evening preceding his death, which was as kind and affectionate on his part as if he had been my dear Brother. His noble daughter, who was alone present, voluntarily and without my previous

knowledge contradicted him, and made and published a true statement of the occurrence, signed by her husband, Governor Jacob. The date of the letter is at Clifton (Kentucky), August 2nd, 1858. I had much difficulty in finding it; but at last obtained it from Governor Jacob. He informs me there was a pamphlet published at the time by Wm. Carey Jones, the son-in-law of Colonel Benton, which I ought to have; but it is not in his possession. Now, I have thought that this might be procured through my old friend Peter Force. I would give any reasonable price for it, as I wish to leave behind me some interesting reminiscences.<sup>1</sup>

With my kind regards to the members of your family, and especially Mrs. Lawton, I remain, very respectfully,  
Your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: HORATIO KING.

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<sup>1</sup> The following letter, among the Buchanan Papers of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, bears on the subject above referred to:

WASHINGTON, May 2, 1866.

MY DEAR SIR:

Please accept my sincere thanks for a copy of your Book, received yesterday by Mr. Whitehill. I shall keep it as a choice treasure.

I have but a moment before the mail closes, but time enough to say that I regret that Mr. Force has not been able to find the Jones pamphlet, nor have I been able to find a copy anywhere else, though after some hours' search through files of the *Intelligencer* and *Union* I *have* found the same thing, I doubt not, printed in the *Union* of July 28, 1858, together with two columns from Duff Green on the same subject, addressed to that paper and headed: "Gen. Duff Green in reply to F. P. Blair, Sen."

Jones' communication makes three columns in small type. I hope you will know of some way to procure a copy of the paper. I have no idea, however, where one could be had.

Please let me know if I can serve you further in the matter.

In haste, with great respect,

Yrs. very truly,

HORATIO KING.

HIS EXCELLENCY JAMES BUCHANAN,  
Wheatland.

P. S. Mr. Force said he had made a long search, but in vain. He seemed to regret his want of success as much as I do.

Mr. King was unable to find the pamphlet when Mr. Buchanan desired it, but he discovered a copy years afterward in the Peter Force collection in the Library of Congress. See letter to Mr. Jacob, Oct. 28, 1865, *supra*.

P. S. The Jacob letter was, I know, published in the Constitution; but the copy he sent me is from another Paper—perhaps the Intelligencer, I know not.

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### TO MR. STEVENS.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 21 April 1866.

DEAR SIR/

I ought in courtesy long ere this to have thanked you for the interesting Public Documents, speeches, &c., which you have been kind enough to send me under your frank, and I take the present occasion to acquit myself of this duty.

A few days since I observed in an Ohio paper an extract from your remarks on refurnishing the President's House, in which you are made to state that "in Mr. Buchanan's time" there was a deficiency of \$4000 beyond the sum usually appropriated for that purpose. In this you have, unintentionally, I have no doubt, done injustice to one of your constituents.

A similar but more exaggerated statement was made by Mr. Fessenden in the Senate in February, 1862, as he alleged, from information, which at the time attracted the attention of John B. Blake, Esquire, the Commissioner of Public Buildings, who settled the account at the Treasury. In consequence, he published [a letter] in "The Daily Globe, April 3—Supplement," to correct the mistake. Of this I furnish you a copy for ready reference, viz.:

#### REFURNISHING PRESIDENT'S HOUSE.

WASHINGTON CITY, March 13, 1862.

SIR:

My attention has been called to the proceedings of the Senate in the Daily Globe of February 8, (No. 57,) in which I find the following statement made by the Chairman of the Committee on Finance: "I am informed that in the first year of Mr. Buchanan's administration \$28,000 was expended, instead of \$20,000." The information given to the honorable Senator was incorrect. The Act of 3d March, 1857, [11 U. S. Statutes at Large, 225]

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



making appropriations for certain civil expenses of the Government, appropriated \$20,000 for refurnishing the President's House, and it contained the usual provision in such appropriations—that the proceeds of the sale of the old furniture should be applicable to the same object. The old furniture was sold at public auction, and the net proceeds of the sale amounted to \$1,005.94. This sum, with the appropriation, making \$21,005.94, was all that was expended during the administration of Mr. Buchanan for refurnishing the President's House. As I disbursed and accounted for the money, I hope you will do me the justice to publish in the *Globe* this correction of the error into which the honorable Chairman was led by the incorrect information he had received.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN B. BLAKE.

JOHN C. RIVES, Esq., Editor of the *Daily Globe*.

Whether you may think proper to correct the error I leave entirely to your own discretion.

It is a curious fact, which as an antiquary you may like to know, that there never was to my knowledge a *Gold Spoon* in the President's House. They were silver spoons plated with gold which were brought there by Mr. Monroe. I well recollect that in General Jackson's time the plating had been partially worn off and they appeared like mosaic work. They were replated afterwards, but under what President I do not know.

Yours very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: THADDEUS STEVENS.

TO MR. KING.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, 23 June, 1866.

MY DEAR SIR,—

I am pleased to learn that you arrived safely at home the day you left us. You left very kind remembrances of you behind. Indeed, the Sabbath when all the company were together was passed charmingly, but I fear not much to Christian edification.

<sup>1</sup>Turning on the Light, by Horatio King, pp. 205-206.

I have read your poem ["Employment Necessary to Happiness"]. There is much good sense in it and it is better than the common run of American poetry. Still, I think you were more distinguished as Assistant Postmaster-General and as the chief of the department than you will ever become as a poet. Notwithstanding, I read your poem with great pleasure and interest.

I have not yet obtained a copy of the letter I promised to send you. It shall be forthcoming in good time.

We have no news worth mentioning. The four ladies desire to be kindly and cordially remembered to you, and we all desire to see you again whenever this may meet your convenience.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON : HORATIO KING.

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TO MR. KING.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND July 14th 1866.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have received yours of the 9th Instant, and now send you a copy of my Hayesville letter which I received this morning from the Daily Express (Republican) of Lancaster, in which it was published on the 2nd of Oct., 1861.

"Old Blair," in his letter to the Public of August 15, 1856, against my election, makes a point of my recommendation of General Cameron's Bank at Middletown as a safe depository of a portion of the public money. This he asserts was made a short time before Mr. Polk's election in 1844 and during Mr. Tyler's administration, when the Deposit Bank System was, unfortunately, in full operation. I have not the least recollection of any such recommendation; but if it exists, as I suppose it does, then General Cameron, my neighbor and at that time my political friend, must have called upon me for it and I gave it as a matter of course.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Should you be at the Treasury Department I should like to have a copy of this letter which Blair says was written in November, 1844; but I say in sincerity I care little for it, and do not give yourself much trouble about it.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: HORATIO KING.

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TO MRS. JOHNSTON.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, 18 July, 1866.

MY DEAR NIECE/

I have received yours of the 12th and desire to express my sympathy for your sufferings from the extreme heat of the weather. I have received a letter from Annie giving me an agreeable account of her visit to you, & stating what a good housekeeper you are & how happy you are in your domestic relations. God grant this may ever continue! She says Mr. Johnston and yourself are looking forward to your paying me a visit in August, & that he is very anxious you should go to the country for a while. You know that my house is ever open to you & you shall always receive a cordial welcome. The same I am certain will be extended to you whether I am at home or not. I feared from your former life that you might be inclined to leave home too often, & therefore I guarded you against such an inclination; but whenever you can come here, you know how much pleasure your society would afford me, & this would be increased by that of Mr. Johnston.

I enclose you the last letter of Mrs. Ellis and I confess I am disappointed that your name is not mentioned in it. Please to return it to me. I had only thought of going to Saratoga to meet her; & when informed she would not be there I determined to go to Bedford *because I really require the use of the waters*. I intend to take Thomas with me, who has behaved

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 648.

very well since his last escapade. I do not anticipate a pleasant visit. The place will swarm with Republican intriguers. James Reynolds & Henry Magraw have gone there in advance of the main column. The latter, though professing democracy, will take part in all their intrigues on the Senator & other questions.

<sup>1</sup>

Your affectionately,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MRS. JOHNSTON.

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### TO MRS. JOHNSTON.<sup>2</sup>

BEDFORD SPRINGS, 30 July, 1866.

MY DEAR NIECE/

I have received your favor of the 25th, & would answer it at greater length; but this will be delivered to you by Miss Goffy [Goughey] Carroll who can tell you all the news. My time passes pleasantly enough & everybody is kind. I shall leave here with Mr. North on Monday the 6th August unless some friend should arrive in the meantime with whom I can travel home at a later period. Thomas is useless & worse than useless. I shall send him home to-day or to-morrow.

You inquire, Is there any chance of Clymer's election? If I am to believe the shrewdest calculators in the State—I don't pretend to give my own opinion—he will certainly be elected. Such is Governor Porter's opinion though he thinks that on joint ballot there will be a majority in the Legislature against us. If so a Republican will be elected Senator, & among the list of Candidates,—*such candidates*, there is very little choice. Cameron's chance is, I think, the best. You have doubtless observed that Thaddeus Stevens has made the *amende honorable* for having charged us with spending more than the \$20,000 appropriated.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Three paragraphs, relating to personal matters, are here omitted.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 649.

<sup>3</sup> See Mr. Buchanan to Mr. Stevens, April 21, 1866, *supra*.

I think from all I can learn here that the Rev: John Chambers of Philadelphia is most probably engaged to Miss Howard; but Miss Carroll will tell you all about it. I have found the Howards quite agreeable, & the old General much more so than I had anticipated.

With my kind regards to Mr. Johnston, I remain  
Yours affectionately,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MRS. HENRY E. JOHNSTON.

P. S. If you so desire you might come to Wheatland by the 8th August whether I am at home or not.

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### TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, August 10, 1866.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I returned the day before yesterday from a visit to the Bedford Springs, from which I derived much benefit. Indeed my health is now quite as good as I can reasonably expect, considering my age.

You ask my opinion as to the course which the approaching convention ought to pursue. Whilst I do not feel myself competent to state in detail what ought to be their proceedings, yet one thing is certain; they ought, neither directly nor indirectly, to break up the organization of the old Democratic party by forming anything like a new party. Leaving this as it is, and must ever remain, they ought to confine themselves pretty much to the question of reconstruction, and to the admission of Senators and Representatives from the Southern States.

Our most prudent and far-seeing politicians, as they inform me, believe that Mr. Clymer will be elected governor, and this would be the beginning of the end. But drop the principles and the name of Democracy, and our case would be hopeless. In re-

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 649.

gard to what your history should contain, I have nothing to say.<sup>1</sup> Of this you are unquestionably the best judge. It possibly might appear to be an anachronism to introduce the events of the late war. But you know best.

From your friend very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

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TO MISS JANE BUCHANAN.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND, August 10, 1866.

MY DEAR JANE:—

Your letter of the 19th July was duly received, and would have been sooner acknowledged, but for my engagements at Bedford. I returned home on Tuesday afternoon, after a very agreeable visit, and one, I think, beneficial to my health. As in duty bound, I called to see the Nevins yesterday, and had the pleasure of meeting the bishop in embryo, and Cecil, as well as Doctor and Mrs. Nevin, and Blanche. I find that during my absence all the younger branches of the family have been diligently employed in croquet. They won a match to which they were challenged by the townspeople, which gives them great satisfaction, and they are eager to enter the lists with Jennie Roland. Has it never occurred to a lady of your sedate character, that croquet, like dancing or any other innocent and healthful amusement, may be carried to excess? . . . Your future uncle, Rev. Dr. Alfred Nevin, has, I fear, sustained a damaging defeat in his controversy with Judge Black on the subject of political preaching. Can you not persuade your father to come to the rescue. . . . The little house at the entrance of the park

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<sup>1</sup> The work here referred to was afterwards published under the title "The History of Democracy; or, Political Progress Historically Illustrated," by Nahum Capen, LL.D.

<sup>2</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 650.



looks rather shabby, but I have promised you to put it in order, and on this you may rely.

You seem to have suffered much from the heat. Philosophers have calculated how many thousand years would be required to cool a ball of iron as large as the earth, but as your body is not very large, I trust that ere this you have become cool, and been relieved from the headache. I trust that Lois is also learning to live like other people.

——— was expected to return from Cape May last evening where she had been for some time with her brother ———. I think she manifested a want of taste in not cultivating the “three rowdies.” Certain it is, sinner as I am, I found them very agreeable. I think she should marry, and to this I would have no objection, if her yoke-fellow should be a proper person.

I expect Mrs. Johnston here from the 15th to the 20th. I shall, indeed, be very glad to see her. The Baltimoreans whom I met at Bedford say she never looked better, and that she appears to be very happy. God grant that her marriage may prove prosperous, and that she may not neglect the things which belong to her everlasting peace!

Miss Hetty is as busy as ever, and although we now have a good waiter and cook and two good girls, yet her employment is incessant. She could not live without work. I have never known her to take so much to any of our visitors as she did to the three croquet players.

I have now nearly filled my sheet with a grave letter, and hope you will ponder over its contents.

Give my kindest love to your father and mother, as well as the rest, especially to Lois, for whom this letter is partly intended. Never again call her Lodi.

Yours affectionately,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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TO MR. KING.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND August 29th 1866.

MY DEAR SIR,

Presuming that by this time you are in Oxford, I write to that place to thank you for your kind letter of the 17th Instant, and especially for the Portland Argus containing my Hayesville letter. I thank you for having caused it to be published. It is in perfect consistency with all I have written or said.

The Democratic party of this State are now in high spirits and feel much confidence that Clymer will be elected Governor. This will be rendered certain if even a moderate number of the Republicans should reinforce the Democratic army and sustain the President's policy.

I do not like the progress to Chicago. I think it is ill judged. Mr. Seward can never obtain the confidence of the Democracy of this State; and the identification of the President with the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the doctrine of "Squatter Sovereignty," the two great measures of Mr. Douglas, will not add to his strength. Judge Black's powerful and conclusive reply to the "little giant" does not seem to have produced any effect on the President.

I approve the proceedings of the Philadelphia Convention as far better than the programme of the Radicals.

I observe, with some surprise, the appointment of Wendell as Superintendent of the Public Printing. I think it impossible that Mr. Stanton, with a full knowledge of Wendell's character, could have approved this appointment. But I presume that the Blairs will succeed in driving him from office.

Mrs. Johnston is now with me on a visit. She is in fine health and excellent spirits. I have had much agreeable company during the summer and enjoy my usual health. I need not say that I shall always be happy to see you at Wheatland whenever you may be able to come.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: HORATIO KING.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 21 September 1866.

MY DEAR SIR/

Your letter giving me an account of the Philadelphia Convention afforded me great satisfaction, not only for what it contained, but because your health & strength enabled you to attend that great meeting. Governor Porter left me yesterday afternoon after a visit of a day. We had much conversation about old times, & you were freshly & kindly remembered. I wish you could have been with us. Old friends are fast leaving us, & our places will soon be supplied by a younger if not a better generation.

The Governor, on whose sagacity & foresight in regard to the result of elections I formerly greatly relied, speaks with much confidence of the success of Mr. Clymer. I trust in God he may be elected. There has not been a more important election, both in regard to State & National affairs, for the last fifty years.

Mrs. Johnston has been passing a month with me, but left yesterday with her husband. She appears to be very happy, & has, I think, an excellent & indulgent husband.

You complain of your difficulty in writing; but I hope you will not fail to inform me occasionally of your health & how you are getting along. Any of your children or grandchildren around you can become your amanuensis. I trust that the chain of friendship which has so long bound us together may be burnished & remain bright as long as we both shall live.

With sentiments of warm & sincere regard, I remain, always your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON : GEORGE G. LEIPER.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, October 2, 1866.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I was greatly amused and pleased with the graphic description of your dream which placed me in the pulpit. We have sore need of such preachers as you saw in your vision. I fear that infidelity and indifference to religion are making rapid advances in our country. Away with political preachers!

I rejoice to learn your advancement in the very important history, and earnestly desire that the blessing of Heaven may rest upon your labors.

In answer to your inquiry about the probable result of our governor's election, I can say but little of my own knowledge. Our most discreet friends, however, calculate with considerable confidence on the election of Clymer. The President's pilgrimage to the tomb of Senator Douglas has done the cause no good. It would have been better had he rested on the issue as it was made by the Philadelphia Convention.

Mrs. Johnston returned to Baltimore a fortnight since in good health and spirits. I intend to pay her a visit soon after the election.

Your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND 30 November 1866.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND/

I am always rejoiced to hear of your health & happiness, and your last letter afforded me much pleasure. Yours is, indeed, a green & happy old age, surrounded by affectionate chil-

<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 651.<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

dren & grandchildren and enjoying the respect of all. Our old friends are daily leaving us behind, and we cannot expect to linger long after them. I was very sorry to read the statement of the death of "Old Cave."<sup>1</sup> I served four years with him in Mr. Polk's Cabinet. He was an honest man and a pure Democrat; and when he believed himself to be right, his determination amounted to obstinacy. He was a great economist of the public money, but by no means improperly sparing of his own. I was much attached to him.

Mrs. Johnston gave birth to a son ten days ago & is doing quite "as well as could be expected." I know she will be very glad to see you when you visit Baltimore.

On politics I have but little to say. I have never known any good come to the Democratic party from hiding or suppressing their principles for the sake of expediency. A bold avowal & maintenance of them can alone ensure its triumph. But I am "an old foggy" and take no active part in giving direction to its proceedings. It is certain we have not made much by our alliance with Johnson republicanism. You express a hope that Johnson will stand by his ground, in which I cordially concur. I fear the symptoms are not very favorable; but a few days will decide the question. Should he stand firm, the Democratic party will be bound by every principle of faith & honor to stand by him on the question of reconstruction; but should he abandon his own policy, the separation ought to be immediate. We should then hold up the principles of Jefferson and Jackson on our banners & maintain them to the last.

Before you go to Baltimore, please to let me know in advance. It is possible we may meet there. And how happy it would be for me to meet an old & valued friend who has stood by me in good & in evil fortune!—My health is as good as usual.

Please to remember me kindly to Mrs. Leiper, & believe me always to be sincerely & respectfully

Your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: G. G. LEIPER.

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<sup>1</sup> The Hon. Cave Johnson.

TO MR. GRAFFEN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 22 December, 1866.

MY DEAR SIR/

I regret deeply that I did not see the Philadelphia firemen at Wheatland on their recent visit to Lancaster. A visit from them would have been a gratification and an honor which I should have highly prized. Unfortunately, I did not receive Mr. Howell's note of the 18th, appointing the time at half-past 9 o'clock of the next morning for the purpose, until the afternoon of the 19th at 5 o'clock. Instead of this being sent to me by messenger, it was deposited in the Post Office, and thus it did not come to hand until more than seven hours after the time appointed for the visit. I would thank you to explain the circumstances to any of the firemen whom you may meet, should you deem this necessary. I should be deeply mortified could any of them suppose I had been wanting in the high respect to them so eminently their due.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

CHARLES GRAFFEN, ESQ.

TO MESSRS. OSBORN AND BALDWIN.<sup>2</sup>*(Private.)*WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,  
26 December, 1866.

GENTLEMEN/

I received, on last evening, the New Haven Daily Register, containing an extract from Abbott's Lives of the Presidents. This is a repetition & concentration of all the slanders which were

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 651.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 652.



in circulation against myself during the first years of the war, notwithstanding their falsehood has been since established by clear & conclusive official evidence. For your very able & searching reply to Mr. Abbott's statements please to accept my most cordial thanks. As the work purports to be history, I may possibly notice it in the only manner which would make its author feel how much injustice he has done me. I remain very respectfully and gratefully yours,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MESSRS. OSBORN and BALDWIN.

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1867.

TO MR. MARBLE.<sup>1</sup>

(*Private.*)

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

30 January 1867.

MY DEAR SIR/

Having just read in yesterday's World the vindication of my views against Mr. Greeley's assault, I cannot deny myself the pleasure of thanking you for the article.

If any principle is well established, it is that the Constitution confers no power on the Federal Government to coerce a state in its sovereign capacity; it is equally clear that it provides ample means to enforce the execution of the laws against individuals in any and all the States.

And I take this occasion to say that after having regularly perused the World for a considerable time it is in my opinion just such a Journal as the Democratic party of the Union ought to be proud to possess. I hope it may have an extensive circulation in every State.

I know not whether you have read my Book "On the Eve of the Rebellion," but whether or not I send you a copy as a token of my regard. I believe no fact therein stated has ever

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

been specifically contradicted. In writing it I was careful to furnish my authorities, & these are mostly official. I would refer you to pages 96, 97, & 98. No man who was not on the spot at the time can justly appreciate the influence which the Tribune exercised in inducing the Southern people to believe they might secede with impunity. Against Mr. Greeley I have no feeling of hostility. He is often guided by honest & generous impulses; but from his nature and "his head over heels" manner of writing he is incapable of becoming a discriminating and unbiased historian. Accuracy is certainly not his forte. I have never seen or read his late history of the war, nor is it probable I ever shall; though I read the Tribune daily, and have often admired the clearness and the power with which the World corrects his wanderings & brings him down to the subject in controversy.

Permit me to obtrude the opinion that I cannot anticipate any good to result from holding a U. S. Democratic Convention at the present time, though it may be productive of much evil. I am happy to infer that the World is of the same opinion.

Yours very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MANTON MARBLE, ESQ.

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TO MRS. JOHNSTON.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, February 12, 1867.

MY DEAR NIECE/

I was glad to receive your favor of the 6th after so long an interval. Poor Mrs. Jenkins was buried yesterday and Miss Old & myself were invited as mourners. Her death made a deep impression upon me. I have been intimately acquainted with her ever since I first came to Lancaster, & was groomsman at her wedding. Her life is all before me, and with some slight failings it is a beautiful picture. Her social & domestic character were nearly all that could have been desired. Whether in prosperous

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection; Curtiss's Buchanan, II. 653.

or adverse fortunes she was ever the same kind wife, mother, & friend. I was always attached to her.

My own health is now pretty much as usual, though after my dinner in Philadelphia, which was all I could have desired, I had a pretty sharp attack of Rheumatism which confined me to Wheatland for a week; but, thank God! it has passed away. Like Achilles I was wounded in the heel, & funny enough it passed out at the little toe.

I knew that Henrietta Jane would render herself agreeable wherever she went, and am not at all surprised that the Carrolls are unwilling to part from her. This shows they are sensible people.

I have not seen Mrs. Franklin since the receipt of your letter. When I do I shall not fail to inform her how much gratified you were with the present.

I regret to say that the slippers are much too large for me & therefore I have not worn them; but as a token of your regard I value them as highly as if they were a good fit.

We have no local news of much importance, except that everybody is to be married.

On Thursday last, Jane Slaymaker, Harriet Old, & Mrs. Lane passed the day with me on their own invitation and it was a most agreeable day. Mrs. Jenkins was not considered at all dangerously ill on that day, though she died on the next. Mrs. Shunk was not with us, having gone over to York to look after her house. She is now here as agreeable as ever though Mr. Shunk has gone to Philadelphia for a few days.

I see the Nevins as often as usual. The Doctor & Mrs. Nevin, Blanche, & Wilberforce were all at the funeral, though the Bishop in embryo was not present. I presume he has returned to his studies as his mother said nothing about him & I forgot to ask her for him.

With my kind regards to Mr. Johnston, I remain yours affectionately,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MRS. HENRY E. JOHNSTON.

FROM MR. MARBLE.<sup>1</sup>

WORLD OFFICE, N. Y., Feby. 25th, 1867.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have awaited the arrival of your promised volume, "Mr. Buchanan's Administration on the Eve of the Rebellion," which only reached me on Friday last, before acknowledging your great kindness in enabling me to substitute upon the shelves of my library for the copy which I already had possessed myself of, by purchase & perusal, one which will always be an honored memento of your good will, or replying to the letter which reached me nearly a month ago, and conveyed with such flattering kindness your approbation of the conduct of "The World."

But I beg you to believe me very sensible of their value, for indeed I should not know where to look for more solid grounds of self-congratulation on the management of an independent journal during troublous times, as the representative of a party in a hopeless minority and without fit leaders in any responsible station, than in the opinion of the venerable man who was one of its foremost leaders in the era of its power, and who filled the highest of public stations whilst it was charged with the government of the country,—that it had not been unfaithful to its principles nor inadequate to its trust.

It has seemed to me during the debate & since the passage of Sherman's Bill that the duty of the World was never so responsible or difficult or delicate as now. Suddenly the whole political situation has changed, & what foresight can discern the course now to be pursued, & be confident that it will lead to the least of future evils?

It would not have been a sound calculation any time before last December that Congress could stultify itself in the manner it has done. It was not credible then that it would come to abrogate the Southern State Governments and re-establish martial law from the Potomac to the Rio Grande. But this or worse is the fact to-day.

What is the duty of the Northern Democracy—what the best policy for the South? Hitherto we have had some defensive strength at least in the President & the Supreme Court. But the daring turpitude and reckless lawlessness of Congress, by cutting off all hope of relief previous to the next Presidential election, seems to make that election the only key to the political situation—and our success in it, which is not possible without the Southern electoral votes, the only defence against unmitigated military despotism at the South (worse for us to practise than for them to endure) and the only hope for the future. A Radical President and the impossibility of getting a Senate which would pass over his veto laws repealing the acts of the 39th & 40th Congress would leave the way to the worst oppressions quite unbarred, whatever revolution in the public sentiment of the North might take place to change the character of the 41st Congress (Ho. of Reps.).

The Supreme Court itself can hardly remain conservative in its majority

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

many months longer. The oldest judges are the likeliest to be first removed, & the law of last session reduces the number to seven. But were a case made up to test the Constitutionality of Sherman's bill, & an adverse decision reached by the survival of five aged men, delay sufficient to exclude the South from the election would still be accomplished, & that without remedy. The Radical domination would be fastened upon the country for another six years—counting from the coming 4th of March.

But despite the unequivocal Congressional pledge that the South shall be restored on compliance with the Sherman Bill conditions, and supposing it to be possible for such compliance to be brought about, is there a high degree of probability, is there any probability whatever, that the 40th Congress would regard the pledge of the 39th and submit to be foiled in the very purpose of their policy?

If the better whites of the South do not "reconstruct" under Sherman's bill, will not whites of the baser sort be found, enough by co-operation with the blacks to make a majority to do so & permanently secure the negro vote for the radicals? All these contingencies must have passed through your mind. I should be glad to know if you think we do enough to invite the attention of the South to them, without expressing a definite desire that they shall make a selection of the evils which seem their only lot—& ours.

I remain, dear Sir, with the most sincere respect and regard,

Your obedient servant,

MANTON MARBLE.

THE HON. JAMES BUCHANAN,  
Wheatland.

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## TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 27 February 1867.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND/

I am truly sorry to learn by your favor of the 22d Instant that you have been confined to the House for some time; but I trust that the approach of Spring may reinvigorate you, and that you may yet enjoy days of peace & comfort. Still, when men have attained our age, they cannot calculate upon the future. We have survived nearly all our contemporaries; and we ought to devote ourselves to a preparation for the change which is inevitable. It is as natural to die as it is to live. It is our duty

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

to prepare for the last event by seeking for the consolations of Christianity. A kind providence has made your long life prosperous & happy. You have been uncommonly blessed in your family, & you have always enjoyed the esteem & confidence of your fellow men. May you yet live years in tranquillity & content!

I have been touched with the fact that your letter is the only one you have written since the date of your former one to me. We have been warm friends for many years; and we shall remain warm friends till the one or the other is called upon to pay the debt of nature. Your friendship has been a great comfort to me for many years.

I do not wonder that you feel little interest in reading the Newspapers. As you observe, there is no news but what is "bad, bad, bad." A Military Government, under the authority of Congress, in time of peace over ten States of the Union is a catastrophe of which we never could have dreamed ten years ago. How this violent proceeding, in defiance of the Constitution, will eventuate I do not venture to predict. I still hope for the best & do not yield to despair.

My own health continues good for a man of my age. The good cheer of Philadelphia was followed by an attack, not violent, of Gouty Rheumatism, which has since passed away.

I have not been in Baltimore during the winter, nor do I anticipate a visit to Mrs. Johnston before the fine weather. I trust we may yet meet there & talk over "the days of other years,"—shoulder our crutch & shew how fields were won, when in the vigor of our manhood.

Please to remember me very kindly to Mrs. Leiper & the members of your family, & believe me as ever to be your old friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON : GEORGE G. LEIPER.

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TO MR. MARBLE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 4 March 1867.

MY DEAR SIR/

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 25 ultimo!

You seem to think there is at least a hope that the Southern States, by accepting the Sherman Bill, might obtain representation in Congress & an electoral vote before the next Presidential election. Under this impression you appear to be somewhat embarrassed as to the course which the World ought to pursue in reference to this Bill. Now, my dear Sir, it is my conviction the radicals have determined that these states shall not vote for President at the next election. They have both the power & the will to prevent it, and the detailed provisions of the Bill itself have been evidently framed to accomplish this very object. Revolutions, it is said, never go backwards; and this is true as a general rule after they are once fairly under way. That the present radical leaders have determined to go to extremes I do not doubt. They have resolved not only to impeach the President, but to suspend his functions during the trial. This is confirmed by the private information voluntarily given me by reliable friends in Washington. They will go ahead in their career until they shall eventually but certainly destroy themselves. Now, what is the Sherman Bill? Can anything be worse? You better know & can better explain its enormity than myself. Ought the World, beyond all doubt the leading & most influential Democratic Journal in the Union, to give the least countenance to this Bill of abominations, even so far as to present it as an alternative to the Southern people?

Is it certain that the Southern States, reconstructed under the provisions of this Bill, under the control of the Military Despotism which it creates, would vote for a Democratic President? Would not the voice of the majority be stifled?

Since you request my opinion, I give it for what it is worth to a gentleman much more capable of forming a correct judgment than an old man no longer connected with political affairs.

The crisis & the climax will come when Congress shall super-

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

sede the President & confer his powers on Ben Wade. Not to speak of the utter want of constitutional power to do this, it would be abhorrent to any enlightened government, even without a constitution, to inflict the highest penalty on the accused before he has had a trial. Even Rhadamanthus would not act in this manner. Is President Johnson adequate to meet the crisis?

In view of impending events, may I suggest to you to look over the trial of Judge Peck before the Senate on Impeachment. It was published in Boston by Hilliard, Grey & Co. in 1833. It was carefully conducted after an examination of all previous precedents by C. J. Spencer & Mr. Storrs of your State, Mr. M'Duffie of S. C., Governor Wickliffe of Kentucky, & myself.

In looking over some old papers on Saturday last I found a single copy of the enclosed. It had a great run in its day & was for me a great triumph, as Mr. Clay did not afterwards pursue his amendment. The speech contains historical facts which may be useful to you as an Editor. If the Radicals had not had two thirds, the authority of Mr. Clay would have been invoked to amend the Constitution so as to make a bare majority sufficient to overrule a veto.

Yours very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MANTON MARBLE, ESQ.

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TO MRS. SHUNK.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 7 March 1867.

MY DEAR MADAM/

On this auspicious anniversary of your birth, permit me to present my cordial wishes that you may enjoy many, very many returns of it in peace, prosperity, and happiness.

Please to accept the enclosed trifle as a birthday token of my

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 654.

affection & esteem for one whose society, during the last few months, has imparted a charm to my old age, the memory of which shall never be effaced from my heart. Deeply regretting that you must so soon leave me, I am & ever shall remain

Your much attached friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MRS. JAMES F. SHUNK.

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TO MR. PACKER ET AL.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 23 March 1867.

GENTLEMEN/

I have received with grateful emotions your very kind invitation to a public dinner you propose to give me, in the City of Philadelphia, on any day I may indicate.

Nothing, I can assure you, could afford me greater pleasure than to meet you around the festive Board and with you renew the pleasant memories of long past years. I deny myself this gratification only in deference to what I consider the wise example of my Democratic predecessors in the office of President. After having administered the most exalted office which their Country could bestow, they deemed it expedient to remain in the retirement of private life; and whilst holding their own opinions on the political questions of the day, they left the public discussion of them to gentlemen like yourselves, still on the busy theatre of active life.

If another reason were required for my self-denial on this occasion, I might refer you to my advanced age, of which you remind me by stating that I am now the last survivor of the "American statesmen of the olden time, and the only living contemporary of Webster and Clay, and Benton and Calhoun." In passing, permit me to say you might have justly added to these

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

distinguished names that of Silas Wright. He was a statesman who for sound, practical wisdom, for far-seeing sagacity, and for lucid & convincing argument had no superior in the Senate, even at the period when it was the greatest deliberative body in the world.

You have my cordial thanks for your opinion that "no responsibility for the years of blood & sorrow we have endured rests on me, who tried in a moment of terrible exigency to do my duty under the Constitution." Proceeding as this does from a large number of my fellow citizens equal in intelligence, character, and patriotism to any similar number of gentlemen in the State,—may I not with much confidence indulge the hope that you but anticipate the general sentiment of future times? Under this impression, and always firmly relying on Divine Providence, I have borne with a patient, tranquil, & contented spirit all the harsh criticisms which have been published on my official conduct throughout the last unhappy years.

Assuming as you do "the immediate future of the Country to be full of peril," you ask me "for words of counsel, of consolation, and, if possible, of hope." Consistently with my self-imposed reticence I may say to you:—Adhere steadily to the Constitution of your Country. Exert all your power & influence in disseminating & enforcing its genuine principles by means of the Press, public speeches, and private conversations, and in every other honorable manner; and employ the same untiring energy in exposing & condemning every departure from its precepts. Never despair; for the time will surely come when these shall triumph in the administration of the Government. These are my words of consolation and hope.

It is a glorious Constitution, and administered according to its plain meaning it has proved sufficient both in peace & in war to secure the prosperity & promote the glory of the Country; and this without straining its import by doubtful & forced constructions to increase the powers of the Federal Government. The fathers of the Constitution justly believed that the harmony & efficiency of our system could not be preserved without preserving the recognized powers of the Federal & State Governments as distinct and independent of each other. They dreaded lest the vast powers and influence conferred upon the Federal Government, from the instinct of all governments to increase

their own authority, might be perverted to injure the weaker party & to usurp the reserved rights of the States. They knew that this power and influence would be constantly increasing with the advancing population & prosperity of the Country and might eventually lead to the consolidation of all power in the hands of the Federal Government. This they dreaded as the worst of political evils. They knew it would be impossible for one Central Government to provide for the ever varying wants and interests of separate peoples of different lineage, laws, & customs, scattered over many States. This could only be accomplished by their respective State Governments, exercising the powers reserved to them under the Constitution. Consolidation, they knew, would produce extensive corruption among the hosts of officers and agents necessarily employed in conducting so vast a concern, a squandering of the public money, a disregard of economy vital in a Republic, & consequently ever increasing taxation; and must finally end in Despotism. Hence has proceeded the much and unjustly abused doctrine of State rights, which is now and must ever be an essential principle of the Democratic party. The true touchstone as to whether the exercise of any proposed Federal power has a warrant in the Constitution is to ask for the specific clause which authorizes it, or, if this cannot be shewn, then to prove that it is "necessary & proper" without any strained construction as a subsidiary means to carry some express power into execution. If this cannot be clearly pointed out, then in the language of the 10th Article of our Bill of Rights, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

An attempt has been made to cast odium on the doctrine of State rights by falsely attributing to it the dangerous heresy of Secession. This never was a State right, because entirely inconsistent with the very nature of the obligations into which all the States entered with each other by the formation of the Federal Constitution. If admitted, it would make the Union a mere rope of sand, instead of a great & powerful Government. Happily the claim has now been forever extinguished.

The Democratic party springs naturally out of the very essence of the Federal Constitution, and must exist as long as it shall endure. Let any man take up the Bill of Rights which our

ancestors deemed necessary to limit & restrict Federal power, and read it line by line, and there he will find embodied most of the essential principles of the Democratic party. I shall not go into the detail, having already proceeded much further than I had intended.

With sentiments of grateful respect, I remain  
Your much obliged friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: ASA PACKER, &c. &c.

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FROM MR. RHETT.<sup>1</sup>

CHARLESTON, April 2d, 1867.

MY DEAR SIR:

The last letter rec'd from you was when you were President of the United States, and you concluded your Letter by subscribing yourself as "Your friend." We will not probably ever see each other again. You will never come to the ruined South, and I will certainly never enter the triumphant North. Seeing your late letter declining an invitation to a dinner in the Papers, the remembrance of the kindly relations which once existed between us forcibly came to mind; and I sat down and wrote the Editorial in the Charleston Mercury which I enclose you. It is an attempt to do you justice. However weak in this respect, it is certainly strong in the feelings which dictated it; and I beg of you to accept of it as my last tribute to the confidence and friendship which once existed between us, and

Believe me, Dear Sir, "Your Friend,"

R. B. RHETT.

HONBLE. JAMES BUCHANAN.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



TO MR. RHETT.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,

8 April 1867.

MY DEAR SIR/

I cannot tell you how much gratified I am with your favor of the 2d Instant. I have a vivid recollection of our friendly intercourse "before the flood," and have ever since cherished for you a warm personal regard. It is more than probable, as you observe, that we shall never again meet on earth. Still, you might yet visit the North; but I am too old to think of ever going to the South. Should I be spared, I shall be seventy-six on the 23d of the present month. Thank God! however, I enjoy good health for a man of my years, as well as a tranquil & contented spirit. May we not indulge the Christian hope that we shall meet again in a better world?

Many thanks for your article in the Mercury. From this I perceive you have never seen my Book. I shall send you a copy; and would do so now, had I any copies on hand. I can say, it is an honest book; and no fact stated therein can be truthfully contradicted. I believe there are portions of it you will not approve; but, if so, we shall agree to differ on political questions like friends, as we did in the ancient time.

With my best wishes for your welfare, I remain

Very respectfully your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. R. B. RHETT.

TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND, April 29th, 1867.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I have received your favor of the 14th instant, and have perused, with much interest, your letter to the Rev. Mr. Blagden. The subject of it, which you treat so ably, has attracted but little

<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>2</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 654.

attention in this part of the country; still, some symptoms are apparent that the Republicans in this State intend to make capital out of it. In this, I think, they will entirely fail. Lager beer, especially among the Germans, and old rye will be too strong for them. Still, intemperance is a great curse to our people, but it will never be put down by laws prohibiting the sale of all intoxicating liquors. . . .

Mrs. Shunk left me more than a month ago, and is now at her father's, in Washington, with her husband. They will all return to York on the adjournment of the Supreme Court. She is one of the most charming persons I have ever known. I ought to add that Mr. Shunk's health is far from being good.

I have been endeavoring for the last two days to prepare an index for my book, but find great difficulty in the task.

The result of the spring election throughout our State has been favorable to the Democratic party; but we have of late years been so accustomed to defeat, that I shall not, too sanguinely, calculate on success in October.

Your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

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### TO MR. KING.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, May 2nd, 1867.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have received yours of the 29th ultimo, informing me of your intended departure for Europe. May you have a prosperous voyage and a happy and useful visit to the old world! My best wishes will attend you wherever you may go.

You will of course meet General Dix in Paris, from whom I have not heard for a long time. I believe you were present in Cabinet and heard his denunciation of Bennett when his name was mentioned in connection with the mission to Turin. How

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

changed he must be; because he and his lady have since been on friendly and visiting terms with Bennett and his family. It is even reported that Miss Dix is to be married to B.'s son. The last is gossip; the first is true.

I am rejoiced to learn that your pecuniary affairs are so prosperous.

With my kindest regards to Annie Augusta,

I remain, very respectfully your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: HORATIO KING.

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TO MR. BAKER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 2d May 1867.

MY DEAR SIR/

What has become of you? Cannot you spare time from your farming operations, if you can do no better, to come up on Saturday afternoon & remain until Monday morning? You would not pretermitt your occasional visits if you knew how much satisfaction they afford me. Mr. Schell was here the beginning of last week, but for a very brief period. I think he is much gratified with the prospect of being a member of the New York Constitutional Convention. By the bye, if the World be the index of the New York Democracy, they are willing to grant suffrage to the Negroes. If they do so, this may have an unhappy effect in Pennsylvania.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. Baker, Miss Emily, and the other members of the family,

I remain your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

COL: J. B. BAKER.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, June 11, 1867.

MY DEAR SIR:—

Your kind letter of the 30th April would long ere this have been answered, but for an *intensely painful* attack of rheumatic gout, several weeks ago, from the effects of which I am now slowly recovering. The index was, of course, abandoned, probably forever. I cannot think for a moment of imposing the task upon you, by accepting your friendly offer. I am now in my seventy-seventh year, an age when my mind should be disembarrassed, as much as possible, from all worldly affairs.

I trust, for your sake, that the "Grand Hotel" may be a great success, and may fill your pockets with stores of gold.

I am glad that the Radical postmaster of Boston has been directed by the Department to apply to you for advice respecting the postal service. "Better late than never" to recognize the value of your improvements and your wise policy in removing the post office.

I no longer give any minute attention to passing political events; but I confess I entertain much apprehension from the efforts now being made to indoctrinate the negroes of the South with the belief that they are entitled to a portion of their old masters' real estate. When will Massachusetts stay her hand?

What is to become of the Supreme Court of the United States—the conservative branch of the Government? When I recall the names of the pure, able and venerable men who have filled the office of Chief Justice, from John Jay to Roger B. Taney, and witness the efforts of the present Chief Justice to drag the judicial ermine through the dirt to propitiate radicals, I cannot help thinking we have fallen upon evil times. But I am now an old fogey.

Should Judge Sharswood be nominated for Judge of our Supreme Court by the Judicial Convention this day, I venture the prediction that the Democratic party will triumph in his election in October.

Your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 655.

TO MR. BAKER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 16 July 1867.

MY DEAR SIR/

Shortly after your last letter to me several weeks ago, I wrote to Mr. Reed and invited him to Wheatland in the most cordial manner. I have received no answer from him, and think it probable he may have never received my letter; and yet none of my letters between this and Philadelphia has ever miscarried. When you see him, I would thank you to ascertain how the matter is. I do not like to write myself under the circumstances.

Mr. & Mrs. Johnston will leave here on Thursday for Bedford; but I shall not accompany them. I am literally weak in the knees. Do you go anywhere this summer? I have some idea of visiting Long Branch or Cape May for a few days for sea bathing; but am reluctant to leave home.

I suppose you are now in the midst of your harvest, enjoying the delights of a country life and enacting the character of Farmer Baker. May your barn overflow with plenty!

With my kindest regards to Mrs. Baker, Miss Emily, and all, I remain, very respectfully

Your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

COL: J. B. BAKER.

TO MRS. JOHNSTON.<sup>2</sup>

CAPE ISLAND, NEW JERSEY, August 14, 1867.

MY DEAR NIECE/

I have received your favor of the 12th, and am rejoiced to learn that you are now at Wheatland where I hope you may remain until the change of the season. You say nothing of the

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 655.

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 656.

health of Baby;<sup>1</sup> but from your silence I infer this to be good. I do not know exactly when I shall leave this place; but I think early next week. I have been much pleased with my visit here and have I think been strengthened, but much more by the sea air than the bathing. I am not quite certain that the latter agrees with me. We have had a great crowd all the time; but the weather has been charming and the company agreeable.

Mr. Bullitt of Philadelphia gave me a dinner the other day, which I only mention from the awkward situation in which I was placed by not being able to drink a drop of wine.

I am very well, thank God!

Mr. Reed is expected this afternoon & Judge Black tomorrow.

With my kindest regards to Mr. Johnston and Miss Hetty, I remain,

Yours affectionately,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MRS. JOHNSTON.

P. S. I ought not to omit to mention the obligations I am under to Mr. Baker for his kindness & attention.

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### TO MRS. SHUNK.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 2 September, 1867.

MY DEAR MRS. SHUNK/

I know you will be glad to learn that I have so far recovered as to be able to sit up and write to you my first letter since the commencement of my very dangerous illness. Thank God! the

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis, in a note, says: "This child, James Buchanan Johnston, an object of the fondest interest to his great-uncle, grew to be a fine and very promising youth of fifteen, of great loveliness of character and marked intellectual powers. He died in Baltimore on the 25th of March, 1881. His younger brother, Henry, the only remaining child of Mr. and Mrs. Johnston, was taken by his parents to Europe in the autumn of 1881. He died at Nice on the 30th of October, 1882. Dark clouds have gathered over lives that were once full of happiness and hope."

<sup>2</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Partly printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 656.



Doctor gives me reason to believe I am now out of danger, & it has been His holy will to spare me a little longer.

Next to Heaven, my thoughts have been fixed upon a preparation of my Biography, as an act of justice to myself & the great men with whom I have been associated. This work shall be immediately prosecuted. I was rejoiced to learn from your favor of the 5th ultimo that Mr. Shunk will give me the notes & the review. Indeed, without the notes I know not how I could get along in regard to my earlier life. I hope he will send me all, as all will be useful. The slightest note will revive my memory. I do not write to Mr. Shunk because he has never written to me & nothing has transpired on the subject except between us.

I shall ever remember with heartfelt gratification the period during which I enjoyed your charming society at Wheatland. I trust you may visit me again before Mrs. Johnston leaves for Baltimore, which will be on the first proximo.

With kind love to your mother, Mary & Jane, & my regards for Mr. Shunk, I remain faithfully and affectionately your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MRS. JAMES F. SHUNK.

P. S. You will please to deliver the notes & review to the bearer hereof, your old friend James B. Henry, who will await your convenience.

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## TO MR. HENRY.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 23 September 1867.

MY DEAR JAMES/

I regret to say that I have not received Benton's "Thirty Years," which you sent me by Express some ten days ago. It has certainly not reached the office at Lancaster. Will you look

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Partly printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 657.

after it, and, if not found, send me the receipt? I now need it.

The Baby has been very sick; but probably not more so than what often happens to children in their teething. Harriet became alarmed and sent for Mr. Johnston, who is now here but will leave this morning. The child is greatly better; but has yet got no tooth. He proposes to return & take his wife home the beginning of next week.

Mr. Reed came here on Wednesday evening last & had to return to Philadelphia on Friday evening. In the mean time he went to York to see Mr. Shunk, who informed him that all the papers were in his friend's safe in Philadelphia. He is to meet Mr. R. in Philadelphia the early part of this week, and the two are to examine them together. *Sed quere de hoc.* I am glad to learn from Judge Black that Mr. Shunk has written a large portion of my early history, which he read to him in January last, & has written it well. The Judge and his lady were here the early part of the last week. We shall always be glad to see Mr. Schell, let him come when he may.

My health and strength are improving daily; but in opposition to the Doctor I do not think the obstruction is entirely removed.

Yours affectionately

JAMES BUCHANAN.

J. BUCHANAN HENRY, ESQUIRE.

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### TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, October 19, 1867.

MY DEAR SIR:—

I have received your congratulations on the result of the late elections with heartfelt pleasure. For this we are mainly indebted to the attempts on the part of Congress to grant suffrage to the negroes, although there are many other good causes for the reaction in the popular mind. Negro emancipation is

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 658.

a fixed fact, and so let it remain forever; but the high privilege of voting can only be constitutionally granted by the Legislatures of the respective States.

I am happy to inform you that, under the blessing of Providence, my health has been restored to its former condition. Indeed, I believe I am better than I was before my attack.

I have no news which would interest you except the old declaration that I am now, and always shall be,

Sincerely your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

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TO MR. BAKER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 31 October 1867.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have just received a letter from Sample, who expresses a strong desire to remain on the Farm, and says that the impression he intended to leave must have arisen from the fact that he has been looking out for a Farm for his brother. I shall not remove him.

The sting of the poisonous insect, whatever it may have been, is now converted into a painful attack of Gout in my left hand & wrist. I have not been able to attend to the Biography or prepare for Mr. Reed. I presume, however, that the trial of Jeff. Davis will occupy all his thoughts until after it shall be over.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. Baker & my love to Emily, I remain always

Your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

COL: BAKER.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 658.

TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, November 2, 1867.

MY DEAR SIR:—

Since the receipt of your favor of the 17th ultimo, I have had another attack of my old enemy, the gout, in a severe form, from which I am just now recovering. This is the only reason why I have not sooner answered your letter and thanked you for your delicious pears. I shall use them as time mellows them. Please to present my grateful acknowledgments to Mrs. Raney for her contribution to the delicious fruit which has afforded so much pleasure to her father's old friend.

I hear perhaps once a week from Mr. and Mrs. Johnston. Both, as well as the little baby, are well.

I reciprocate your congratulations on the result of the late elections, and I do not doubt that New York, New Jersey and Connecticut will do their duty to the country. Still, it may be too late to restore material prosperity to the Southern States. The establishment of negro suffrage throughout their limits, as well as negro government, will nearly destroy the production of the articles which rendered both them and New England so prosperous. I have always been very much of an optimist, but I confess I have now greater fears for the future than I had during the war. Should New England teaching in the South produce a war of races, commenced by the negroes for rights in the soil of their masters, which they claim under the teachings of Sumner, Stevens, and other self-styled philanthropists, the result would be too horrible for contemplation. But enough.

Your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

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<sup>1</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 657.

TO MR LEIPER<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 2 November 1867.

MY OLD &amp; VALUED FRIEND/

I am always gratified to hear from you or of you, and your late letter gives me such a favorable account of your health as renders it peculiarly acceptable. In your good lady you have an excellent amanuensis, whom I hope you will continue to employ in writing to me should you be unable to write yourself.

I congratulate you on having become a Great Grandfather. Indeed, Providence has blessed you far more than other men in your family & descendants. You are truly a patriarch; and may you yet live years to enjoy this great privilege! Still, at our age it is wisdom not to calculate upon prolonged life, but to prepare to meet our God in peace.

After my *dangerous* illness contracted at Cape May, from what cause I know not, I was stung one night on the left hand by what I supposed to be a Mosquito. I paid no attention to it until it began to swell and pain me much. The remedies were soon efficient to cure it; but it has produced a violent & painful attack of Gout in my left hand and wrist, from which I am now recovering.

The result of the late elections has afforded me much pleasure and I doubt not that New York, Connecticut, and New Jersey will follow in the same path. But alas for the South! It is already ruined for years to come without immediate remedy. Negro equality & negro suffrage have already done their work. May a kind Providence avert a war of races!

The Misses Pleasonton, daughters of our old friend the 5th auditor of the Treasury, are now with me and I hope may remain a few weeks. I am their trustee under their father's will. They are both agreeable & intelligent, & serve to make the time pass pleasantly.

With my very kindest regards to Mrs. . . .<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>2</sup> The rest of the sheet is missing.

TO MISS BUCHANAN.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 5 November 1867.

MY DEAR H. JANE/

I was happy to learn from your favor of the 31st that your excellent mother had got home comfortably & safely, and that she had enjoyed her visit. We were truly sorry to part from her. She had rendered herself both agreeable & useful. Should her health run down, I hope she may again come to Wheatland & have it wound up. In any event, she shall always have a cordial welcome to Wheatland. The Misses Pleasonton are still with me, & I hope they may remain another week. Both were greatly pleased with your mother.

I cannot boast and yet have no reason to complain of my own health. The Gout or rather the effects of it still linger in my hand, but are passing away slowly. I fear I shall not soon be able to pay you a visit.

We have no local news which would interest you. It is long since I have seen Mother Nevin. Blanche passed the day with us yesterday, & was as sprightly & agreeable as usual. Patty always speaks of you in terms of warm affection.

I congratulate Harriet & yourself on your visit to the Ox Roasting at the Fox chase. I hope the election to-day in New York may afford you the opportunity of attending another of the same. You might be dressed up in character & enact the part of the genius of America. Your robes might be a happy blending of white & black.

The Misses Pleasonton desire me to present their kindest love to your mother, & in this I cheerfully unite. With affectionate regards for your sisters & Willie, & also for your father, I remain

Your affectionate uncle

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MISS H. JANE BUCHANAN.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



TO MR. SCHELL.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 9 November 1867.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received a proxy, to be signed by me, from Robert L. Banks to H. Henry Baxter, to vote my shares in the New York Central Road Company at the approaching election for directors. Before filling it up I desire to know whether it is in accordance with your wishes. I desire to vote according to your wishes.

You have done nobly in New York at the recent election, & your Democracy have earned the gratitude of the whole Country. *The opposition to Negro Suffrage in the South*, as well as in the North, has been the principal cause of our triumph everywhere. Abandon this, & we are gone. The Constitution as expounded by the Democratic fathers ought to be our watchword. It is long enough & wide enough to cover all our interests, and needs not to be enlarged to suit our present size, as recommended by the World. Emancipation is now a Constitutional fact; but to prescribe the right and privilege of suffrage belongs exclusively to the States. This principle the Democracy must uphold in opposition to the Reconstruction Acts.

I am getting along as usual, and have had much company of late. The Misses Pleasonton have been with me for some weeks, and I find their society very agreeable. I am sorry to say they will leave in a few days.

Your friend, as ever,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

AUGUSTUS SCHELL, ESQ.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 659.

TO MR. JOHNSTON.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, November 14, 1867.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received yours & that of Harriet of the 12th.

I know how cordially welcome I would be at your house, but I fear I shall not be able to pay you a visit for months to come. Like all old men, I feel a very strong reluctance to leave home. The idea of becoming dangerously ill away from home deters me from going abroad. Although relieved from acute pain in my left hand and arm, yet my hand is still so weak and swollen that I cannot carve, and it is but a few days since I ceased to have the meat on my own plate cut up for me. And to add to all this, my left eye is now as black as if I had been fighting with shillelahs at Donnybrook Fair. On Saturday last, supposing that I was at the head of the steps on the front porch, I took a step forward as if on the level, and fell with my whole weight on the floor, striking my head against one of the posts. Thanks to the thickness and strength of my skull, it was not broken, and the only bad consequence from it is a very black eye. How soon this will disappear I know not. I sincerely and devoutly thank God it is no worse. During all this time, the Misses Pleasonton have been a great comfort to me, and I am truly sorry they will leave me on Tuesday next. I do not fear, however, that I shall be miserable without them. I have had a good deal of transient company this fall. But what a long rigmarole I have written!

I rejoice to learn that the Baby is thriving so finely.

Please to remember me kindly to Miss Snyder, and with my best love to Harriet, I remain

Your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HENRY E. JOHNSTON.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 659. Several sentences in this letter, relating to private matters, are omitted.

TO MRS. JOHNSTON.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, December 9, 1867.

MY DEAR NIECE/

I have received yours of the 3d instant and am happy to learn that Baby has recovered from the effects of his trip to New York. You need not be sorry to hear that James left me as soon as I gave him notice that I would not want him after the 1 January. I have obtained a much better man, a Frenchman, for the month of December. Indeed, he is so good I shall be sorry to part from him.

I was truly sorry to hear of the death of my kinsman, Mr. Russell. He was an able and excellent man. It appears that he died a Roman Catholic, which doubtless gratified his wife and his family. I wrote to her the day after I received the Paper from you.

I perceive by a cable Despatch that Mrs. Eustis is dead. I sincerely sympathize with her father, although he behaved badly to me, notwithstanding I rendered both her & him the greatest service in my power. I always liked her very much.

Mr. Reed's Book drags heavily and slowly along, on account of his wife's death & his professional engagements. What he has done he has done well; though on account of James Shunk's misconduct he had to begin in the middle of the work. He has not been here for several weeks. I shall be agreeably disappointed should Judge Black obtain a place for your cousin Mr. Webb.<sup>2</sup>

I wrote a few days ago for Henrietta Jane, with a request that either Harriet or Lois might accompany her. Edward's answer, without mentioning the name of Harriet, informed me that Lois would follow Henrietta in two or three weeks. Whereupon I wrote to Henrietta giving Harriet a kind & pressing invitation to come in the mean time. It is doubtful whether she will accept it. Henrietta is to be here on Wednesday as well as Emily Baker, so that I may expect a gay house.

Mrs. Lane was in Philadelphia last week and I have not

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection. Partly and inaccurately printed in Curtis's Buchanan, II. 660.

<sup>2</sup> Judge Black obtained a clerkship for the young gentleman.

seen her since her return. I have not seen John or James for a long time. I presume John will go to William Reynolds at Bellefont in the beginning of January. Mrs. Lane was very much gratified with the attentions of Mr. Schell whilst she was in New York. These were certainly marked for him. Who knows but that he and your sister may yet make a match.

I have no local news to give you beyond what you see in the *Intelligencer*. The Nevins are as kind as usual. Blanche is an excellent reader. The Doctor passed an evening with me a few days ago. Robert has undoubtedly received great attentions from the clergy in England and has preached there once, if not oftener. I was sorry to learn he was obliged to go to France on account of his health.

I hardly know what to say in regard to my own health though it has been pretty good for the last two or three days. Even had Mr. Reed been able to come here I felt so dull & listless as to be almost incapable of mental exertion. Writing was a great labor to me. I have felt bright for a few days. I fully realize the truth of the Psalmist's expression, that "The days of our years are three score and ten; and if by reason of strength they be four score years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off and we fly away." Nevertheless I am neither dejected nor sorrowful, but preserve a calm & tranquil spirit, thank God! My left hand is still feeble, but is gradually growing stronger.

It is quite impossible that I should pay you a visit during the holidays, though you must know I would be very happy to see you.

With my kind regards to Mr. Johnston I remain, as ever yours affectionately,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MRS. JOHNSTON.

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TO DR. BLAKE.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, 25 December, 1867.

MY DEAR SIR/

I owe you many thanks for your Biographical Sketch of Dr. Jones. I have perused it with great interest and pleasure. It is a worthy tribute to an excellent man. At the request of the first Mrs. Webster and Mrs. George Blake, I accompanied them to the house of Mrs. Mattingly a few days after the alleged miracle had been performed, and heard her own relation of all the circumstances attending it from her own lips.

I have, also, to thank you for the report of the Secretary of the Treasury.

Thank God! my own health is now pretty good,—quite as good as a man of my age has any reason to expect.

I have been cheered by the company of the Misses Pleasonton, and after their departure by that of two of my nieces, the daughters of my brother, & Miss Baker, who are still with me. They have made the house gay and agreeable.

I have no local news to communicate which would be of any interest to you.

I saw a Telegram, some weeks ago, announcing the death of Mrs. Eustis, and sincerely sympathize with her father on account of his sad bereavement.

I presume the interest due on the Virginia bonds on the 1 January next will not be paid. Should I be mistaken, please to inform me of it so that I may send you a draft on John B. Martin, Cashier, for \$220, as I did before.

Wishing you with all my heart long life, health, and prosperity, I remain, ever very respectfully,

Your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

DR. JOHN B. BLAKE.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 661.

TO MR. HART.<sup>1</sup>WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,  
26 December 1867.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 23d Instant, and regret to say that I feel quite unable to prepare such a paper concerning the political & social life of the late General Cass as would be worthy of "incorporation in your work." This would involve an amount of labor which I am unwilling to undertake at my advanced period of life and in my present state of health. Besides, I never served with the General in the Senate, and it so happened that I never was on terms of personal intimacy with him whilst in the prime and vigor of his intellect, nor until after his appointment as Secretary of State in the 75th year of his age.

Wishing you all the success you can desire in the preparation of a work worthy of its distinguished subject, I remain

Yours very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

CHARLES H. HART, ESQUIRE.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Mr. Hart's letter was as follows:

THE NUMISMATIC AND ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY OF PHILADELPHIA.

1819 Chestnut Street,

PHILA., December 23rd, 1867.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY

THE HON. JAMES BUCHANAN.

MY DEAR SIR/

I trust you will pardon the liberty I take in addressing you, but I am about preparing a Memoir of the late Lewis Cass for the above Society, and knowing your close relations with him for so many years, thought you would be willing to give me your recollections and reminiscences of him both political and social, for incorporation in my work.

Hoping you will feel disposed to aid me, I am, with every sentiment of esteem & regard,

Your friend &amp; obd. Servt.

CHAS. H. HART.



1868.

TO MRS. JOHNSTON.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 1 January 1868.

MY DEAR NIECE/

I have received yours of the 27th ultimo, and am rejoiced to know that your health is good as well as that of Baby. I sincerely and ardently pray for your [boy] long life, happiness, and prosperity; and that he may become a wise and a useful man, under the blessing of Providence, in his day and generation. Much will depend on his early & Christian training. Be not too indulgent nor make him too much of an idol. . . .<sup>2</sup>

Miss Emily's party passed off very well. She is gay, sprightly, and agreeable and has much more information than I had supposed. Her father is my best and most useful friend, who is always ready to serve me, and I wished to treat his daughter kindly.

Harriet and Henrietta are still with me, but the former, I regret to say, will leave some time next week. . . .<sup>3</sup>

We have no local news of interest. The Nevins and myself get along kindly, as usual.

With my kindest regards to Mr. Johnston, I remain yours, with great affection,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, private collection; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 662.

<sup>2</sup> A paragraph is here omitted, in which Mr. Buchanan comments unfavorably upon the plan made for a certain youth to discontinue his education and go into business, as if money were "the chief good." Mr. Buchanan adds, "I dislike to think of it."

<sup>3</sup> A paragraph is here omitted, which relates partly to the unfortunate experience of Mr. Buchanan with Judge Black's son-in-law, Mr. Shunk, who went to Wheatland to aid Mr. Buchanan in the preparation of his memoirs, but failed to put into form the materials which were furnished to him largely by Mr. Buchanan's dictation. See, *supra*, pp. 438-9, 448-9.

TO MISS BAKER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 1 January 1868.

MY DEAR EMILY/

I have received your kind note of the 30th, and can assure you we all missed you very much and I was almost broken-hearted at your departure. Still, I think I shall survive in the hope that you may visit us again during the winter. I thank you for the Church Journal. It must be a paper according to your own heart. I think I can see you standing gracefully on the highest pinnacle of Ritualism and taking your flight over to Romanism. You will not have a difficult passage to the dome of St. Peter's.

John Strube has, I believe, got a place for the winter; but I have no doubt he will gladly go to your father as a gardener in the Spring.

The two girls and Miss Hetty send their kindest love to you.

With my very best wishes for your health, prosperity, & happiness, I remain respectfully & affectionately

Your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MISS EMILY N. BAKER.

Please to tell your father that I have not heard of or from Mr. Reed, although in his last letter he stated positively he would be here last week after Christmas, when there would be holiday at his son's school.

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TO MR. CAPEN.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND, January 11, 1868.

MY DEAR SIR:—

Many thanks for your kind New Year's greeting! The friendship and good wishes which you express for me are cordially reciprocated. May you live many years in health, peace and

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Curtis's Buchanan, II. 662.

<sup>2</sup> Curtis's Buchanan, II. 663.

prosperity, and may your great work prove to be a triumph for yourself and a lasting benefit for your country! I think you were right in not turning away from it to write a volume of four hundred pages, as a political hand-book for the next Presidential campaign. Such a volume would be highly useful and important, but it may well be prepared by Messrs. Burke and Gillet. Should they undertake the task, I would suggest that you recommend to them a careful perusal of the debates and proceedings of Congress during the extra session, after the election of General Harrison (first Session of 27th Congress, 1841). Mr. Burke was then a member of the House.

Thank God! I now enjoy reasonably good health.

Your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

NAHUM CAPEN, ESQ.

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## TO GOVERNOR BIGLER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER,  
15 February 1868.

MY DEAR SIR/

Although my age and position prevent me from taking any active part in politics, they do not prevent me from feeling the deepest interest in the success of the Democratic party at the approaching Presidential election. It is for this reason I now address you.

I have not been able, I confess, to feel that degree of confidence in our success which would seem everywhere to prevail. It is true, from the result of recent elections and the justice of our principles, we have good reason to hope for victory; but is there not cause to fear that we have passed from too much despondency to too much confidence? Much will depend on the character of our nominee. He ought to be such a man as would not be exposed to attack, whether justly or unjustly, for his past

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

action on subjects not essentially involved in the present struggle. The attention of the people ought not to be diverted from the great living issues of the day to mere side issues which are past. This is the worst position which a party can occupy. It must if possible be avoided in the selection of our candidate. It now appears certain that General Grant will be the nominee of the Republican party; and in my opinion there is but one man in the Country with whom our success against him would be certain, and that man is General Sherman. There are many civilians whom I should personally prefer to him. I do not know him even by sight; and with me his having been an officer in the standing army from his youth would be a great objection, though not conclusive as it would be were he in the chief command. The issues involved in the next election, however, are so tremendous, so appalling, for the Country that I should be willing to waive this objection & take him, but on only one condition. That is that he should agree to accept the Democratic nomination and to stand firmly and faithfully on the Democratic platform. The Republicans are evidently afraid of him, and his nomination by President Johnson to the rank of General by brevet has caused them much uneasiness. His instincts, I understand, are Democratic, but he is in a bad atmosphere at Washington and is surrounded by bad influences. Still, if he is the brother of Senator Sherman, he is also, as I understand, the son-in-law of Thomas Ewing, the old Senator from Ohio, and the brother-in-law of General Ewing. Above all, he hates Stanton with all his heart.

You may ask, Why do you address me in this manner? I will tell you. It is for the purpose of earnestly suggesting that you should immediately visit Washington and have a private conversation with General Sherman. I know no man in the Country so fit in all respects, from his character and standing, for this important mission as yourself. I think you might assure him, but of this you are a better Judge than myself, that if opposed to the violent unconstitutional and revolutionary measures of the present Congress he would in that event receive the support of the Democracy of Pennsylvania. Indeed, in that event there could be but little doubt of his nomination by the National Convention. That General Sherman cannot approve of these reckless & desperate measures may be fairly inferred from his patriotic and statesmanlike military convention with

General Johnston at the close of the war. Had not this been condemned by the administration of Mr. Lincoln under the prevailing influence of Mr. Stanton, whom General Grant has now embraced as his political friend and brother, our Country would probably at this day have been united, prosperous, and happy.

In writing thus I am not unmindful that your success in this matter may give you that degree of prominence and influence in the Country hereafter which your past able & patriotic services have so richly merited. If you should conclude to act, the present is the very moment.

I desire this letter to be entirely confidential both now and hereafter.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. Bigler, I remain as always  
Very respectfully your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: WILLIAM BIGLER.

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### FROM MR. LEIPER.<sup>1</sup>

LAPIDEA Mar. 31st 1868.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

It seems a long time since we corresponded. I very often think of you, & inquire for your health when I have any opportunity.

I am pleased to inform you my health is better, but the Snow & bad Weather have confined both Mrs. Leiper and myself to the house. I hope as the Spring advances & vegetation progresses I may be able to ride out & enjoy the balmy air. We have just had a short but very satisfactory visit from Mr. & Mrs. John H. Thomas. Mary desired to be remembered to you when I wrote. My granddaughter Mary & Nannie Smith have been in Baltimore during the winter, having a delightful time. Mr. & Mrs. Farnum have been in Phila. My great grandson is the admiration of all who see him.

My son John's Wife is now in South Carolina (Chesterville) where are assembled her brothers & sisters, some of whom she has not seen for years, & her Mother's health being better, they are enjoying their happy meeting.

We expect to have an agreeable accession to our Neighborhood shortly. Mr. Sam Field & Mr. Miller, both good Presbyterians, have bought places

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

within three miles of us, & we hope will join our Church, which needs increase & Support. I get the papers every day & read & have them read to me, but really they are more disgusting than interesting. I grieve for the tottering state of our once blessed & happy Country.

My health has prevented my attending political Meetings for some time, but I have satisfaction in recurring to my honest & steady course through a long life, & among the most pleasant reflections is the continued intercourse & friendship with you.

Mrs. Leiper desires her affectionate regards, and always believe me yours truly,

GEORGE G. LEIPER.

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### TO MR. LEIPER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND 11 April 1868.

MY DEAR SIR/

I was much gratified to learn by your favor of the 31 ultimo that your health has improved. I thought of you this morning with sympathy when I arose, the earth covered with snow and still dressed in her winter attire. Winter truly still lingers in the lap of Spring; but the old tyrant must soon depart. Then, I trust, you may be able to enjoy the season and grow better and stronger. My own health continues to be good, though I have recently had and still have a little touch of gout in my left hand as a reminder. It is yielding, however, to the influence of colchicum.

How blessed you have been throughout a long life in your family; and now in your old age your lady has become your faithful and affectionate amanuensis. She writes a fine hand, in contrast with yours even in your best days. I have had agreeable & sprightly young ladies with me all winter, my nieces & others, who have kept the house cheerful and have read for me as often as I desired.

Though I am not a great admirer of Andrew Johnson, yet his persecutors have made out the flimsiest case against him which was ever presented on so grave an occasion. He ought

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<sup>1</sup> Buchanan Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.



to be acquitted without difficulty; and yet he is foredoomed. Let us hope that a kind Providence will eventually bring good out of evil and make "the wrath of man to praise him."

You have good reason to congratulate yourself on your long, steady, & useful adherence to Democratic principles & to the Democratic party. These are the only true safeguards of Constitutional liberty.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. Leiper & my best wishes for you & yours, I remain always

Your warmly attached friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: GEORGE G. LEIPER.

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## APPENDIX



## APPENDIX

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THE text of the letters embraced in this appendix came into my hands too late for insertion in the regular chronological order. The letters to Robert Tyler, as printed in the *Letters and Times of the Tylers*, were brought to my attention by my colaborer and friend, Worthington C. Ford; and to him am I also indebted for the interesting letters, heretofore unpublished, to George Bancroft, taken from the Bancroft Papers in the Massachusetts Historical Society. The letter to Mr. Ashmead, of January 11, 1847, was, with the courteous permission of Graham Ashmead, Esquire, of Chester, Pennsylvania, furnished to me by Burton Alva Konkle, Esquire, whose helpful kindness I have on more than one occasion acknowledged. To Charles Henry Jones, Esquire, of the Philadelphia bar, my thanks are due for the letters to his father, the Hon. J. Glancy Jones, one of Mr. Buchanan's most valued friends. A native of Berks County, Pennsylvania, Mr. Jones was four times elected to Congress, in which, during his last term, he was chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means. He seemed at one time to be on the point of entering Mr. Buchanan's cabinet, but this was thought to be impracticable when Judge Black from the same State was made Attorney General. Mr. Jones declined the mission to Berlin, but in 1858 accepted that to Vienna, where he remained till the winter of 1861-'62. He died in 1878. A life of him is now in press at the Lippincotts'. The ten letters written to Mr. Jones from London were published in the *New York Sun*, October 10, 1883.

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1844.

TO MR. JONES.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, 2 January, 1844.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have just received your kind letter, after passing several of the holidays at home. The reasons which induced me to

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<sup>1</sup>As to Buchanan's withdrawal of his name as a candidate for the presidency and his address to the Democrats of Pennsylvania, see *supra*, V. 437.

withdraw are 'stated in my address to the Democrats of Pennsylvania, which I presume you had not seen at the date of your letter. After it had been rendered manifest as the light of day that Van Buren would be nominated by the National Convention by an overwhelming majority, my course was taken. It was a duty which I owed to my party, to my friends—such true-hearted and faithful friends as yourself—and to myself, to yield to the will of the majority. I would not be the leader of a forlorn hope up till the moment of defeat before the National Convention, when such defeat might prove disastrous in Pennsylvania to the great party which has done me so much honor, and would leave my friends in a false position. Mr. Van Buren is neither my first nor my second choice among the other candidates, but whether for weal or woe, we shall have no other alternative but to support him. Calhoun's strength has dwindled down to South Carolina and a portion of North Carolina; and Colonel Johnson's to Kentucky. Even Arkansas has gone for Van Buren. Cass has but little strength anywhere, even in Michigan. Under these circumstances, the path of duty appeared plain to me, after long and deep reflection; and although a little rugged, I determined to tread it.

I should have consulted some of my friends, and you among the rest, on the subject, but I felt confident there would be conflicting opinions, which must have resulted in greater embarrassment.

I can form no opinion in regard to the confirmation or rejection of Mr. Porter. The subject has been everywhere discussed except among Senators. The Whigs are in the majority, and I know not their feelings.

With every sentiment of gratitude and respect, I remain

Sincerely your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

J. GLANCY JONES, ESQ.

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1847.

TO MR. ASHMEAD.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON 11 January 1847.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received yours of the 7th Instant; & can assure you that our conversation on board the Steam-Boat or any other conversation which we may have on a similar subject, has been & shall be held by me as strictly confidential. You have nobly redeemed your voluntary promise.

You know my opinion in regard to the Native American party. It never can be, and I think never ought to be, successful throughout the country. I, also, know very well that many of its members are good Democrats on every subject, except that of naturalization. I would greatly regret, if such men should gradually be drawn into the ranks of the Whig party.

I shall be happy to see you in Washington whenever you may think proper to pay us a visit & to converse with you on any subject which you may suggest.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

JOHN W. ASHMEAD ESQUIRE.

TO GEORGE BANCROFT.<sup>2</sup>

WASHINGTON, 25 February, 1847.

MY DEAR SIR/

We received our foreign mail by the Cambria but yesterday morning; and Mr. Pakenham informs me that we must send our Despatches by the mail of this evening so as to reach Boston in time, Sunday intervening. Amidst the pressure of business at the close of the Session and the necessary despatches to other Legations, I have scarcely time to say more than God bless you!

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<sup>1</sup> This letter on the back is marked "Private."

<sup>2</sup> From the Bancroft Papers in the Massachusetts Historical Society.

I think I may state with confidence that since the open defection of Calhoun from the administration, the party is much stronger and more united. We shall, I think, carry all our important measures, with the exception of the Lieutenant General. A much better feeling exists in Congress than heretofore. Should the Senate strike out the Wilmot proviso from the three million Bill, the amendment will be concurred in by the House by a large Majority. Mr. Calhoun says the war is unpopular. This I do not believe. The President has given offence because he was obliged to select from a very great number of offers in the adjacent states, the organised companies ready to march to Mexico under the bill to raise the ten Regiments. Indeed the military enthusiasm seems to pervade the Union.

I do not think that the law of Nations would justify the hanging as pirates the subjects of Neutral States who might accept Mexican Commissions. At all events, before this could be done, Congress must pass a law for their trial as pirates. We have not yet been able to get a law passed even for the trial as such of neutral subjects who are declared to be pirates by our Treaties. As to hanging them up at the yard arms;—this is out of the question under our institutions.

Father Ritchie is just now riding on the whirlwind if he is not directing the storm. Hurrah for Wilkes and liberty. He is identified with a great principle, the liberty of the press, which has been violated in his person by the Senate, and the public sympathy is with him. I am glad of it, because he required some such circumstance to bring him up. He is now spoken of as Vice President, if not President; but protests that he will not be a candidate.

Please to say to Baron Brunnow that I cordially reciprocate his kind feelings.

The winter has been very gay, the parties incessant. Even Lent has produced no sensible effect. I am heartily tired of them.

I regret that Mrs. Maury<sup>1</sup> has written so ridiculous a book. We are all angels except Grinnell, and she makes herself

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<sup>1</sup> Sarah Mytton Maury, *née* Hughes, a native of England, was a writer of some celebrity in her day, being the author, among other things, of "The Englishwoman in America" (1846) and "The Statesmen of America in 1846" (1847). For further particulars, see Appleton's Cyclopædia of American Biography, IV. 266.

the most conspicuous amongst the heavenly party. Col. Benton says that Angels on earth would be very insipid: and I think so too. She is a good natured, kind hearted woman, in love with our Country: and I entertain for her the most friendly feelings; but what to write in reply to her dedication I do not know.

I think that C. J. Ingersoll will be nominated for France and Mr. Tod, the defeated candidate for Governor of Ohio, to Brazil in place of Wise recalled at his own request. The Brazilian difficulty has been amicably and honourably adjusted between Mr. Lisboa and myself, upon suitable apologies from him in behalf of his Government.

Not one word from Mrs. Bancroft. This is too bad. She did not even send her cold respects. I shall not retaliate. Please to present her my warmest regards and give my love to the young lady. My time is out.

Ever your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. GEORGE BANCROFT.

No immediate prospect of closing the Mexican war though appearances are more in favor of such a result than they have been heretofore. Scott's extravagance if indulged would beggar the Treasury.

## TO GEORGE BANCROFT.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON 29 September 1847.

MY DEAR SIR/

Having completed my European Despatches for the Packet of the first I sit down to write you whatever may come "*uppermost*." And first of all, don't fail to send me your report on the British Navigation and Colonial laws, direct and indirect trade and all that sort of thing. Such a paper as you can prepare will do yourself credit and be very useful to me.

The Presidential question begins to excite much interest in both parties. In my opinion, notwithstanding all that has been said to the contrary, General Taylor will be the nominee of the Whig National Convention. The impolitic and anti-national

<sup>1</sup> From the Bancroft Papers in the Massachusetts Historical Society.

course of the Whig party will secure this result. Their anti-territory and anti-war course is so unpopular that they must select a war Candidate or be badly beaten. General Taylor will be a hard horse to beat. Against a Civilian he will take the votes of many of our "hurra boys"; and his no party declarations will aid in this process.

We have lost poor Wright who had the soundest head combined with the warmest heart, of any statesman within my knowledge. *Requiescat in pace!*

My letter in favor of the Missouri Compromise has kicked up a wonderful dust throughout the Country. It has been enthusiastically received at the South and much better in the North than I had anticipated. It was written under a solemn sense of public duty; and whatever may be the result I shall ever possess the consciousness that I have done a good act. The Wilmot proviso is fast sinking in public estimation; and it would not be sustained at all if it were not supported by the Barnburners of New York.

We have not yet received General Scott's official Despatches nor the result of Mr. Trist's mission. As we are expecting them every day it would be vain to speculate upon what they will be. Trist had two meetings with the Mexican Commissioners previous to the 29th of August and was to have a third on the 30th. His anticipations were favorable though by no means certain. Santa Anna is fully and publicly committed in favor of peace and he is a ruined man unless he can accomplish it. There may be great difficulty in obtaining the meeting of a quorum of Congress to sanction it. Our excellent Consul Black was here the other day and I mentioned this difficulty to him. He said it was no difficulty at all. I asked why? He informed me that Santa Anna would appoint members to fill all the vacant seats and that he had several times done this before!

The Cabinet get along very harmoniously and you are often freshly remembered by us all. Mason has great difficulty in getting his orders executed in due season. He is too yielding. Clifford is a capital fellow.

The Organ is very often out of tune. With the best intentions, he has done the party much injury. His article on the Confiscation of Mexican Church property has very much soured the Catholics against us. Mr. Ritchie has bought

Corcoran's new and splendid house on the President's square, and his family are perhaps the gayest in this City.

The Clock strikes four and the foreign mail must close. I would send my love to Mrs. Bancroft; but this would now be quite too familiar; therefore, present her my kindest respects. Mrs. Madison and Annie are in their accustomed health.

Ever your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MR. BANCROFT.

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### TO ROBERT TYLER.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, December 25, 1847.

MY DEAR SIR:

A merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year to you and Mrs. Tyler! This I wish with all my heart, and trust that my wish may become a reality.

Your speech at the great meeting has extended your reputation. I received several letters from Philadelphia, written by individuals capable of appreciating its merit, who say it was the best political speech they ever heard. Of this I informed the President, and he voluntarily undertook to have the proceedings published in the *Union*. You may then judge of my disappointment, when, upon opening the paper this morning, I discovered that the speeches were omitted, whilst the letters were published. I will complain of this to the President.

Ritchie has, I think, no favorite candidate. His game is to be non-committal. He fears to offend any, and thus displeases all. The present printers of Congress, it is supposed, will be compelled to abandon their contract, and he is looking out for the printing of the Senate. Rives will be his competitor. I have been astonished, however, at the evident reluctance to publish the proceedings, although the President was delighted with them, and anxious for their publication.

Things here remain pretty much as they were when you were with us. Prospects would be very fair, indeed almost certain, were it not for the divisions in Pennsylvania, which

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<sup>1</sup>Letters and Times of the Tylers, II. 458.

are magnified into an importance they do not deserve. The State looks better and better.

With every feeling of grateful regard, I remain, sincerely your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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1848.

TO ROBERT TYLER.<sup>1</sup>

(*Private.*)

WASHINGTON, July 13, 1848.

MY DEAR SIR:

I owe you many thanks for your kind letter of the 8th instant. Although a man of but few professions, I cannot forbear to say to you that I warmly appreciate and reciprocate your friendship. Nothing could gratify me more than to witness your prosperity and your elevation to that high standing, both personal and political, which is due equally to your commanding talents and your excellent heart. The day is rapidly approaching when you will be properly estimated.

It is my fixed determination to retire to private life, at least for a season, at the close of the present administration. I have already written several letters to different friends throughout the State in reference to their inquiries, stating positively that I shall not be a candidate, either for the office of Governor or that of United States Senator. I could not fully explain my reasons for this course in a letter without taking up too much of your and my time; but I am convinced that in a conversation of half an hour I could satisfy you that I had judged correctly. Besides, my own strong inclination impels me to the shades of private life. I am sick and tired of my present situation.

I bore my defeat at Baltimore with perfect resignation. The conduct of the Virginia delegation alone disturbed my equanimity. To trade me off for the chances of making Mason Vice-President, and then to fail so signally in the attempt, was unworthy the Ancient Dominion. "How are the mighty

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<sup>1</sup> Letters and Times of the Tylers, II. 460.



fallen!" I have no doubt that in abandoning me the delegates did not obey the will of their constituents. I think the prospect is tolerably fair that the slavery question will be settled before the close of the present session, by the adoption of the Missouri Compromise, or something like it.

It is yet too soon to form a correct opinion in regard to the result of the presidential election; but from present appearances, I think the chances are in favor of Cass and Butler. Beyond the limits of New York it is believed that Van Buren will take more votes from Taylor than from Cass. According to my present estimate, Cass will receive the electoral votes of Maine, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Texas, Arkansas, Alabama, Mississippi, Missouri, Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Michigan. These States give one hundred and forty-four electoral votes, whilst one hundred and forty-six are necessary to an election. To make up the deficiency, we have a fair prospect of carrying South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana, and are not without hopes of Georgia and Tennessee. Taylor's nomination has not been any where hailed with the enthusiasm which I had anticipated.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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## TO GEORGE BANCROFT.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON 20 October 1848.

MY DEAR SIR/

It affords me great pleasure to introduce to you the bearer hereof, Mr. Joaquin de Osma, who is about to proceed to London as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Peru to the British Government.

Mr. Osma represented his Country in the same character in the United States for a considerable period; and this necessarily brought me into free and unrestrained intercourse with him. I ever found him to be a gentleman of high intelligence, of frank and honorable character and of a truly American spirit. You may converse with him freely on all subjects relating

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<sup>1</sup>From the Bancroft Papers in the Massachusetts Historical Society.

to the independence and interests of all the Spanish American Republics.

I do not mean this as a mere common letter of introduction; but I desire specially to commend Mr. Osma to your kindness and confidence.

From your friend very respectfully

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: GEORGE BANCROFT.

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### TO GEORGE BANCROFT.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON 11 December 1848.

MY DEAR SIR/

You were doubtless astonished at the result of the presidential election. It is deeply mortifying to me; and especially as Pennsylvania abandoned the Democratic Candidates. Coal and Iron have exercised a more important influence than I had apprehended. But it is vain to regret the past. "Not Jove himself upon the past has power." We must look to the future.

The administration of General Taylor will, I have no doubt, *be decidedly Whig*: and the more Whig it is the better for the Democratic party. You are a shining mark and your able and efficient services, with your eminent and popular character in Great Britain, will not save you from proscription. There are several gentlemen anxious to obtain your place. Indeed from present appearances, there will be a fiercer scramble for the spoils than at the commencement of General Harrison's administration. Taylor is, I believe, honest and firm; but he is a decided Whig. He may possibly, for a brief period, resist proscription; but he must eventually yield.

In the midst of our misfortunes, I have the consolation that I hope before very long to see Mrs. Bancroft and yourself. I have a thousand things to say to you.

Should you determine not to return to Massachusetts I should think that this City would be a most agreeable residence for you. It is a duty which I owe to the party in Pennsylvania

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<sup>1</sup> From the Bancroft Papers in the Massachusetts Historical Society.

to return there; but if I were to leave that State Washington should be my place of residence.

With my kindest regards for Mrs. Bancroft, I remain,  
as ever,

Sincerely your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: GEORGE BANCROFT.

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### TO GEORGE BANCROFT.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON 18 December, 1848.

MY DEAR SIR/

In the concluding paragraph of my despatch to day, I used the words "reasonable pretext," which I have changed in the draft to "reasonable cause," as less harsh.

In your admirable last letter to Lord Palmerston, you have omitted to comment upon the second order of the Irish Govt. drawing an invidious distinction between native and naturalized citizens of the United States. Both for public and private reasons I would advise that you should allude pointedly to this in your protesting note.

But little is known of what General Taylor intends. It seems to be the general belief that Mr. Clayton of Delaware will be my successor; and that Mr. Crittenden will be Attorney General. He might be what he pleased; but it is supposed he would prefer the latter place. The Webster Whigs and the Lawrence Whigs of Massachusetts, it is said, are very hostile to each other. Mr. Lawrence, I learn from very good authority, is anxious to be Secretary of the Treasury: and it is my impression that he will be preferred to Mr. Evans of Maine; though the latter is much more fit for the place. The Whigs, great and small, are ravenous for office.

We who are about to retire are "as merry as crickets." We neither feel regret nor despondency. We are mortified alone from public considerations. The State Department has never been a pleasant situation for me, though it might have

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<sup>1</sup>From the Bancroft Papers in the Massachusetts Historical Society.

been so, and personally I long to enjoy the privilege of being once more a private citizen.

I perceive the English Journalists are delighted with General Taylor's election; although if his party be pledged to any measure, it is the repeal of what they call the free trade Tariff. But the political partiality of the British people for the Whigs is sufficiently strong to overcome their personal interest.

The idea of General Cass having a penchant in favor of involving his Country in war is truly ridiculous.

With my kindest regards for Mrs. Bancroft I remain always

Sincerely and respectfully your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. GEORGE BANCROFT.

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1849.

TO GEORGE BANCROFT.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON 8 January 1849.

MY DEAR SIR/

The President has determined to entrust you *alone* with the negotiation under the 12th Article of your postal Treaty, provided it is conducted in London: but, if in Paris, you and Mr. Rush are to act jointly. All this has been explained to Mr. R. in a despatch. He is an amiable and excellent gentleman; and this was due to him.

You ask, "Shall I resign? Shall I wait?" I say wait: but I do not consider it a matter of much importance. It is believed by many that General Taylor will not make removals except for cause; but this I do not believe. He may come here with such a determination; but he must yield to the clamors of the Whigs for office. Beyond the Cabinet, however, I do not think that any public officer ought to feel himself bound to resign. Each one ought to consult his own feelings.

The Whigs here are as ignorant of the intentions of General Taylor as the Democrats. He has certainly kept his own counsel

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<sup>1</sup>From the Bancroft Papers in the Massachusetts Historical Society.

thus far. I understand from reliable authority, he has written to a friend, that with a single exception (which is supposed to be Crittenden) he will not determine who shall be members of his Cabinet until after he shall have arrived and consulted his friends in this City. It is thought by many that Crittenden will not accept a place in the Cabinet; and if he should, that it will be the post of Attorney General. In either event, Clayton has been designated pretty generally by Whig public opinion as my successor. Clay, it is said, is determined to come to the Senate; and so mote it be. He will raise the d—l there. The part of the dying gladiator will be his.

The Democratic party are not now in a good condition; but common misfortune will eventually produce a common effort to regain power.

With my respectful regards for Mrs. Bancroft I remain  
Very respectfully your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

MR. BANCROFT.

P. S. Johnson's instructions have not yet reached the department; and we will wait no longer for them.

## TO GEORGE BANCROFT.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON 5 Feb. 1849.

MY DEAR SIR/

Your last Despatch has been received; but I have not time to answer it to-day before the departure of the next Steamer. The President still thinks you ought to make the protest, and I confess I concur with him in opinion. The Cabinet were unanimous upon the subject. It is in fact the sustaining of your course by the President. You have referred in your note to Lord Palmerston to the orders to the Irish police; and your reference has not been contradicted. I know the source from which you derived your information and it is of an unimpeachable character. Besides, on a call of the House of Representatives, my note of instructions to you has been published. These orders were a great outrage, and I have

<sup>1</sup> From the Bancroft Papers in the Massachusetts Historical Society.

no doubt many persons in the United States are watching with anxiety for your protest. I shall send you formal instructions upon the subject by the next Steamer; but, if judicious, you might anticipate them.

It is understood that Mr. Cass has been elected to the Senate and most of the Whigs here dread his advent. He will come into the Senate stripped of his power and irritated by the knowledge that most of his old friends deserted him for the sake of General Taylor. It is said and I believe that no kindly feeling exists between the two. Clay may regain his influence; but a man of seventy-three probably cannot do much. "In life's last stage what prodigies arise," &c. &c.

No Whig here knows who will compose General Taylor's cabinet, but all the indications are that it will be a decided Whig Administration.

The President informs me that he has advised you not to resign; and I am clearly of opinion that duty does not require you to do so. I think, however, if I were in your situation, I would send my resignation to the State Department and at the same time express my willingness to remain until the arrival of my successor but manifest a desire to be relieved as soon as possible. By pursuing either course you will do right. Perhaps it is too late to adopt this suggestion, as I cannot doubt that a nomination will be sent by Gen: Taylor to the Senate before their adjournment in March.

I hear you purpose to reside in George Town. I think this will be a mistake. Washington City is the place for you. It is the most agreeable residence in the Country. If in George Town you will necessarily seek your Society in this City; and you will only be embarrassed there. If I were to leave Penna., I should not hesitate a moment in selecting Washington.

I intended to pass this afternoon in writing you a despatch; but Stephens of Georgia has discovered a new "mare's nest," in a protocol signed by Messrs. Sevier and Clifford before the ratification of the late treaty by President Herrera. The protocol contains nothing but an explanation in accordance with the Treaty; but the Whigs are trying to raise a storm about it. The members coming to the Department for explanations have kept me busy all day.

I shall attend to the request relating to your accounts.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. Bancroft and the assur-



ance that no person will give you a more cordial welcome to your native land than myself, I remain as ever

Sincerely your friend, in haste,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: GEORGE BANCROFT.

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TO GEORGE BANCROFT.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON 18 Feb. 1849.

MY DEAR SIR/

I shall make it a point to have your accounts finally settled till the 31st December before I leave the Department; and shall allow you every thing I can without setting an inconvenient precedent. I am glad there is so very little difference between you and Mr. Pleasonton. He is an excellent old gentleman and a faithful officer. With him and with his family I am on terms of more intimate friendship than with any other persons in this City.

I was at a little party last night where I was informed by several Senators, Whig and Democratic, that Mr. John M. Clayton had received a telegraphic despatch yesterday from General Taylor informing him that he was to be Secretary of State. This settles the question between him and Mr. Rives. It is supposed that the communication was made, because the Legislature of Delaware will adjourn in a few days and the Governor is a Democrat. Mr. Clayton will doubtless, therefore, resign his seat in the Senate forthwith so that a Whig may be elected to take his place.

Nothing further is known in respect to the Cabinet; although it is stated with great confidence that Mr. Crittenden will not take a seat in it.

From present appearance the rush for offices, high and low, will be greater than at any former period of our history.

There is a pretty strong indication that the Whigs will be divided as to the principles which ought to regulate General Taylor's administration. Many are in favor of continuing to

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<sup>1</sup>From the Bancroft Papers in the Massachusetts Historical Society.

pursue generally the policy of the present administration; whilst the antediluvians will insist upon their exploded doctrines.

The humbug of the Mexican protocol produced some excitement at first; but the President's message and the accompanying documents have exploded it, as on all former similar occasions.

With my kindest regards for Mrs. Bancroft I remain as ever  
Your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: GEORGE BANCROFT.

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### TO GEORGE BANCROFT.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON 3 March 1849.

MY DEAR SIR/

In the hurry of the last day of the present administration, I have only time to inform you that Clayton will be Secretary of State, Meredith of Philadelphia of the Treasury, Crawford of Georgia of War, Abbott Lawrence of the Navy, Ewing of Ohio P. M. General and Preston of Virginia (not the old Senator) Attorney General. This Cabinet will be Whig enough in all conscience. The office hunters, high and low, are here in vast numbers intent upon their prey, and the old General will not be so successful in resisting them as he was the Mexicans at Buena Vista.

The Whigs already appear to be in confusion. The Cabinet as a whole, with the exception of Mr. Clayton, does not seem to meet very much favor. I have little doubt but what the administration will be proscriptive. I have never seen the Democrats in better spirits.

In great haste, I remain sincerely and respectfully  
Your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: GEORGE BANCROFT.

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<sup>1</sup>From the Bancroft Papers in the Massachusetts Historical Society.

TO GEORGE BANCROFT.<sup>1</sup>

*Private & Confidential.*

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 29 June 1849.

MY DEAR SIR:

On my return from Washington on Tuesday last, I received your favor of the 8th Instant. Whilst there I had a long conversation with Messrs. Clayton and Meredith in relation to the construction of our Acts of Congress, in view of the repeal of the British Navigation laws. Mr. Clayton informed me that you had stated to the British Government, that the mere passage of the Act would annul our only Navigation law of the 1 March, 1817, and would open the trade between the two Countries upon terms of equal reciprocity. I was obliged to express the opinion that this was not correct so far as regards the last branch of the proposition, and determined as a friend to write to you on the subject by the very next Packet.

The Act, of 1 March, 1817, prohibits all imports into the United States in foreign vessels, except in such as belong to the Country of which the goods to be imported are the growth, production, or Manufacture, &c. &c. The proviso to this Act prevents goods from being brought from the British Colonies to the United States in British vessels. Abolish this proviso, and what is the consequence? Simply that goods &c. may be imported into the United States, in British vessels from British Colonies in the direct trade. To relieve them even in this case from our discriminating duties, the satisfactory evidence required by the Acts of March 3d, 1815, and 7 January, 1824, must be produced to the President.

To complete your business, to finally accomplish the great object, the British Government ought, after the repeal of the Navigation laws, to comply with the terms of the Act of 24th May, 1828, (8 Laws U. S. 124) in reference to all their dominions; and then the President, nolens volens, will be compelled to issue his proclamation, "declaring that the foreign discriminating duties of tonnage and imports within the United States, are, and shall be suspended and discontinued, so far as respects" British vessels and the produce, manufactures or merchandise imported into the United States, in the same, from

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<sup>1</sup>From the Bancroft Papers in the Massachusetts Historical Society.

the British Dominions *or from any other foreign Country*. This will open the whole of the direct and indirect foreign trade to the vessels of both nations upon terms of perfect equality. Such is Mr. Walker's opinion as well as my own.

It is, perhaps, fortunate that the present administration can exercise no discretion upon the subject. They must carry into effect the Act of 24 May, 1828 (passed in the days of Jno. Q. Adams), by issuing the proclamation. Such is the correct construction of the law, and such has been the uniform practice under it. This opinion I expressed strongly to Mr. Clayton, and he concurred in it.

These brief hints are given to you in pure friendship. If the British Government should act upon the principle that the mere repeal of the Navigation laws, *per se* and without more, will open to their vessels our trade, direct and indirect, upon the same terms with our own vessels, they will be disappointed.

Finish your glorious work before you leave, by bringing home, or sending home, "the satisfactory evidence" from the British Government required by the Act of May, 1828, that from and after the 1st Jan. 1850, &c. &c. &c. It would be a sad thing that for want of this mere formality, any serious difficulty should be interposed.

Let there be no time left for agitation or for an appeal to Congress.

Alas poor Mr. Polk! Would that Providence had lengthened his life a few years, that he might have witnessed the fruits of his own administration! It will be one of the most brilliant and useful in our annals.

I have but little doubt that the Democrats will elect their Canal Commissioner in this State in October by a handsome Majority. Nothing can prevent this but an injudicious selection, which I do not anticipate. It is not now, as formerly, when the Nominee of a Democratic Convention, State or National, was always indorsed by a Majority in Penna.

I now reside at a beautiful place in the Country, about a mile and an half from Lancaster; and may truly say that I am contented and happy. I do not render myself miserable by ambitious longings and would not willingly, even if I could, return to the Senate.

I had always cherished a faint hope that you might settle

in my neighbourhood. The beautiful place where Mr. Cheves formerly resided is within a quarter of a mile of me and could be procured, *I think*, on reasonable terms. I look forward with great pleasure to our meeting, when I shall be able to explain to you "the incidents in the councils of the Cabinet" which puzzle you.

With my kindest regards for Mrs. Bancroft, I remain sincerely and respectfully

Your friend

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON: GEORGE BANCROFT.

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1852.

TO ROBERT TYLER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, January 8, 1852.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have received your kind letter of the 6th. You have, indeed, performed all and more than all that you ever promised. To have lost the city and county would have been almost political destruction; to have gained them, enables me to breathe deeper and freer. Thanks to the glorious Democracy of the city and county, the question is no longer who shall have the majority, but what shall it be in this State.

I believe we shall carry the city and county of Lancaster. We have the Democracy by an overwhelming majority if they will only turn out to the delegate elections. My friends are active and busy, and have sufficient means; yet I shall make no confident prediction.

I know not how to conciliate the Van Burens. I never quarreled with them; but sacrificed myself in '43 and '44—now one of the heaviest charges against me in the interior of the State—to give Mr. Van Buren a unanimous nomination. We must have some more active friends in Washington, even if we have to send them there.

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<sup>1</sup> Letters and Times of the Tylers, II. 496.

With my kindest regards for Mrs. Tyler, and best wishes for the young stranger, I remain, in haste, gratefully and respectfully, your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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TO ROBERT TYLER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, near LANCASTER, 8th June, 1852.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have received your favor of yesterday, condoling with me on my defeat. You ought rather to congratulate me on the ability, devotion and energy of my friends. They have fought a good fight, and have deserved success. It was not their fault if they could not command it. For the first time I have had a fair trial and have been fairly defeated; and I can say from my heart that the only circumstance which now grieves me is that I shall be without the power to benefit such true and valued friends as yourself to the extent of my wishes and their deserts. I yet may do them some good even in a private station.

I am truly grateful that Colonel King has been nominated as Vice-President. He is a pure, honorable and sound-judging man, and would make a safe and excellent president. I am well acquainted with General Pierce, having served with him for four or five sessions in the Senate. He is a sound and inflexible Democrat, and an honest and honorable man. Should he be the president, I feel confident he will give no countenance to the speculators and corruptionists who now, like vultures, surround the public Treasury. Virginia has nominated him, and must now look after him and keep him straight.

I now give you your final discharge, after long, able and faithful services, but live in the hope that I may yet be able to manifest my gratitude to you by something more decisive than words.

From your friend, Very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

P. S. Don't forget to bring Mrs. Tyler to see us.

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<sup>1</sup> Letters and Times of the Tylers, II. 498.



1854.

TO MR. JONES.

UNITED STATES LEGATION,  
LONDON, June 23, 1854.

MY DEAR SIR/

Many thanks for your kind note of the 6th instant. I wish you would often drop me such brief notes giving me a bird's-eye view of affairs, which you could write in five minutes at your desk.

The Elgin treaty has been received with great favor by the public journals of this country. His Lordship is a very able man, and went to Washington, I believe, with great discretionary powers. He is very shrewd, but entertains warm friendly feelings for the United States, and has expressed them on all occasions in this country. He is the best public speaker, in point of manner, I have heard in England, but this is not saying very much for him. I was at a public dinner last evening, given by the Lord Mayor to the Bishops, which was as dull an affair, and the speaking as heavy, as I have ever witnessed on any similar occasion. By great good luck I avoided making a speech.

I do not know why the President quoted me as an authority that the introduction of coal duty free would not affect Pennsylvania. Doubtless he has heard me express this opinion, or he would not have made the remark.

If so, it must have been the opinion, which I hold, that the Nova Scotia bituminous coal can never injuriously compete with the anthracite of Pennsylvania. I have not yet been informed of the provisions of the treaty, as the fishery and reciprocity questions were retained at Washington. I have, therefore, only a general idea of its contents. I earnestly hope I shall be satisfied with them.

I was astounded when I learned the result of the Philadelphia election. I had entertained apprehensions of the result, but had no conception that the majority against us could be so great.

On public considerations I am very sorry for the loss of the ticket; and for personal friendship for Herst and Badger I

deeply regret their defeat. The Know Nothings may exert an unfortunate influence for some years to come.

I have nothing of the least interest to say concerning myself. My duties, both social and official, are very laborious. The former will not be oppressive after another month, when the London season will terminate and the nobility and gentry will all leave London.

With my respectful regards for Mrs. Jones, I remain as always,

Very respectfully your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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TO MR. JONES.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,  
LONDON, Dec. 8, 1854.

MY DEAR SIR/

In answer to your favor of the 7th ultimo I have to say that I got Mr. Bates, the leading partner of the house of Baring Brothers & Co., closely connected with the Bank of England, to make the examination which you requested. His answer, under date of first instant, is as follows:

“I have the pleasure to inform you that I have made the inquiries you desired at the Bank of England, and have been unable to find any money or funds in any department of the bank to the credit of ‘Evans estate.’ This is rather a vague description, and if any further information is desired, the parties should give more particulars.”

The truth is that the credulity of our people, perhaps excited by the interested rumors set afloat from here, has induced them to expend large sums of money in pursuit of old and vast estates in the moon. The Jennings estate and the York and Lancaster estate have nearly passed away; but, if I may judge from the letters I have received, independently of your own, the Evans estate is about to take their place. This may not be moonshine; but the only mode of ascertaining the truth is to employ some eminent solicitor to investigate the subject. The profession enjoy a monopoly here of such investigations. Title deeds are in their possession instead of being recorded, and no man

of business in London ever thinks of making such investigations for himself. Besides, the expense is far greater than our experience in the United States would induce us to credit. The Legation could not undertake the task if you would quadruple our force. I will, however, from special regard to yourself, make one suggestion. If you can obtain sufficient information about this Evans estate to afford a clue for the investigation, and the persons interested will send me a bill of exchange for £15 sterling, in favor of Messrs. Atkinson & Pilgrim, eminent solicitors in London, whom the Legation employ when they have any business, I will undertake, without having seen them, that they shall make a thorough investigation. The expense incurred by them in doing it will amount to the greater part of this sum.

I have no public news to communicate which you will not see in the public papers. If the President has communicated to Congress my correspondence with Lord Clarendon on the Central American questions, I would thank you to send me several copies through the despatch bag. They would arrive here at the very nick of time to be useful.

I see it stated in the American papers that I intend to return home next spring. This was never my intention. My two years in this legation will not expire till the end of August, and it is my purpose to remain here until the 30th Sept., the end of the quarter, and return in October, unless at the time something should be pending which it would be improper for me to leave. From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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1855.

TO MR. JONES.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,  
LONDON, Jan. 11, 1855.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 16th ultimo, and, although without a Secretary of Legation and having more business of different kinds to transact than one man can accomplish, I

cannot deny myself the pleasure of congratulating you upon the proud position you now occupy in public opinion. I should not do this did I not believe it was well deserved. Those who formerly expressed doubts of your political, not of your personal courage, must have had all these removed by your conduct, as wise as it was bold, since you reached Washington. May your course be onward and upward.

I now receive many more letters from the United States than I can possibly answer. This grieves me much, because I pride myself on being a punctual correspondent, especially with my friends. Should you hear any complaints, I know you will make my excuse.

You present a numerous and formidable list of Presidential candidates who "will all be discussed." For my own part, I have not allowed myself to indulge a single personal aspiration on the subject, and shall be more than content should the choice fall upon any other man "fit for the crisis." Still, as my friends in Pennsylvania have brought me forward "upon their own hook," it will be a proud consolation to me in any event that the Democracy of the great and good old State have not deserted me "when I am old and grayheaded." This will make retirement doubly sweet. Besides, it will give to the true Democracy of the State their just influence, provided they remain united, both in the State and in the Union.

I intend to leave London for Paris and the Continent about the middle of next month to meet my nephew, J. Buchanan Henry, who is already there. As he speaks French like a Parisian and Italian tolerably well, it will be very agreeable to me to have him with me. I have never seen a young man better calculated in all respects to be a diplomatist; but he has not any idea of commencing this career, and seems intent on pursuing the profession of the law. I have often thought of suggesting to you the mission to England, for which you are well qualified; but have refrained from doing so because you are so much needed at home. If to the present salary there were added house rent, this would not be an undesirable position, even in a pecuniary point of view. Besides, this Legation and that at Paris, for the convenience of the American citizens, ought to have a permanent abode, and not be changed with every succeeding minister. The frequent removals of it disarrange the papers, and do injury in a variety of ways. I now pay £740

(\$3,581.60) for a furnished house and a stable. If I could have taken a lease of such a house for twenty years for the Legation, I am quite satisfied it might have been obtained for £500.

Deeming that it could do you no harm in any event, and whether elected to the Senate or not, I have suggested your name in proper terms to Gov. Marcy, but have truly said: "I make this suggestion without the knowledge of Mr. Jones, and without having the least idea whether it would be agreeable to him or not."

We shall, I think, have peace in Europe before the season for opening another campaign. France and Turkey both desire it, and Russia much needs it. John Bull, however, is anxious for another campaign to recover his prestige. He has gone to immense expense in preparing for it, and is now in a better condition to prosecute the war than he has probably been for half a century.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. Jones and the family, and to your Democratic colleagues from the Keystone, I remain, very respectfully, your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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## TO ROBERT TYLER.<sup>1</sup>

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,

LONDON, Jan. 18, 1855.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have received your kind letter of the 19th ultimo, and it has afforded me, I was going to say, unmingled pleasure. There is one expression in it, however, to which I cannot subscribe. I affirm in the most positive terms that I have always "done real justice to your personal attachment to myself and to my political character and fortunes." You have always held a *very high* place in my regard, quite as high as that of any other friend, and I have been happy to believe that this feeling has been cordially reciprocated on your part. I can now say this without suspicion, because *I am not, nor shall I be, a candidate for any office.* I hope, however, should life and health

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<sup>1</sup> Letters and Times of the Tylers, II. 516.

be spared, yet to pass many a happy hour with Mrs. Tyler and yourself.

Miss Harriet often speaks of you both, as well as the children. She is now absent as bridesmaid at the wedding of Miss Jackson, near Liverpool, a daughter of Mr. Washington Jackson, formerly of Philadelphia. I do not think there is any danger or any hopes, as the case may be, of her marriage to an Englishman. I think as you do on this subject. You are mistaken in supposing that I hear much or often from Philadelphia. The reverse is the truth. Judge Campbell and Mr. Hunt never write, and it is a long time since I have received a letter from Van Dyke. I regret, nay, I deplore, the divisions among my friends; but I have no right to sit in judgment upon them. Besides, I am totally ignorant of the cause of the rupture. They all stood by me faithfully in the hour of trial, and my gratitude shall only terminate with my life. This feeling is as strong as you could desire it to be towards yourself.

I have full faith in the election of our friend Wise, "that terror of the Greeks, that man of men." His energy, his ability, his eloquence, and, above all, his righteous cause, will bear him in triumph throughout a contest before the sons of the Ancient Dominion. God grant that I may not be disappointed! He is sustaining the cause of religious freedom and constitutional right against a secret political society whose principles are at war with both. Still, nothing can be so bad that there is not some good in it, and the good in the Know-nothing organization is their apparent determination to put down the slavery agitation. Whether sincere in this or not, it will have some good effect in the North. It will at least be an obstacle to the current of abolition. It astonishes me, however, I confess, to learn, as I have done from several sources independently of your letter, that the Know-nothings are making considerable progress in the South. I am informed that Southern Whigs are willing to unite with them for the purpose of breaking down the Democratic party. This they cannot accomplish. That great party will again, Antæus like, rise from the earth with increased power and energy. It is true that, in the mean time, much harm may be done, but this will only make our triumph in the end the more certain and decisive.

The war against Russia is emphatically a war of the people of this country, and they are annoyed to perceive "their cousins



on the other side of the Atlantic " sympathize with their enemy. They do not believe in high quarters here that the negotiations at Vienna will result in peace. Still, I do not consider this improbable, as the Czar is a wise man, and the odds against him are now great. It is certain that he will not be able at this time to annex Constantinople, which has been the object and the aim of Russia for a century. This object she will never abandon.

Ireland now seems to be, and I believe is, entirely loyal to the British Crown. Indeed, there does not now appear to be a particle of discontent there. Such is the concurrent testimony of all those acquainted with the country with whom I have conversed. What a wonderful change!

In regard to my condition here, I have nothing now to communicate. I get along very well, but am gratified with the anticipation that I shall be at home before the close of the present year. My labor is hard; but to this I have been accustomed.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. Tyler and your brother, I remain, faithfully,

Your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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TO MR. JONES.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,  
LONDON, 4th May, 1855.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 11th ultimo and am pleased to learn that the American people begin to interest themselves about Cuba. The Ostend report was prepared with much deliberation after we had possessed ourselves of all the information within our reach. We were unanimously of opinion that the time had arrived when a solemn and formal offer should be presented to the constituent Cortes to purchase the island; and were convinced that we should be powerfully aided in accomplishing the object by the influence of the Spanish bondholders, the Spanish clergy, and the commercial classes in England. Spain is hopelessly bankrupt, and her creditors can have

no hope of payment but in the sale of the island. That of the church property to which the Government has resorted, will prove to be only a temporary relief for immediate wants; and besides will give great offence to the clergy. Had Mr. Soulé been instructed according to our report, the question would have become European as well as Spanish, and while we had everything to hope from this fact, we could have nothing to fear. Perhaps, however, Augustus Cæsar Dodge may be able to remove all the clouds which now "lower upon our house."

Gov. Marcy, I am informed from all quarters, is now an active candidate for the Presidency, and when the Presidential maggot invades the brain of the wisest (happily I am not in this category), it prompts him to do many foolish things. Still, however, I do not doubt but that Gov. Marcy honestly differed from us in opinion, and at the first the public seemed to adopt his views. Although never doubting for a moment what would be the final result, I did not expect the reaction would take place quite so soon as it seems to have done.

The Know-Nothings will lose their power and must speedily perish, but whether before the next Presidential election is a question of doubt. It has severed many rotten branches from the tree of Democracy, whose places will be more than supplied by fresh, pure, and vigorous branches.

The news you will find in the public journals. There seems to be but little hope of peace, though the allies have greatly reduced their demands upon Russia. In the present temper of the British people, smarting under their disasters in the Crimea, had peace been concluded upon the terms proposed, this would beyond all question have expelled the existing Ministry from power.

The Emperor and Empress of France while here received me with more than common courtesy. He expressed a warm feeling in favor of our country, and an ardent wish that the friendly relations between the two countries might never be disturbed; all of which I reciprocated. The Empress, without being very beautiful, is very fascinating.

Please to remember me very kindly to Mrs. Jones and the family. Miss Lane unites with me in this request, and also desires her kindest regards to yourself. From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

## TO MR. JONES.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,  
LONDON, June 1, 1855.

MY DEAR SIR/

By the last steamer I received your favor from Washington of the 9th ultimo, and feel greatly indebted to you for the information it contains. Although I have nothing of any importance to communicate in return, yet, as you truly say, being "a friend to reciprocity" in correspondence I write now to preserve my reputation.

I am much gratified that you were so well received at Washington; but feel confident that your reception was no better than you deserved. I am rejoiced that your political position is now so elevated, and earnestly hope that all the wishes you have expressed and more, may be realized.

Heaven grant that Wise's anticipations may prove correct, and that he may be triumphantly elected. He is now the great man of Virginia—able, energetic, and eloquent—and his friendship has bound me to him by "cords of steel."

We shall not learn the result before the 11th inst. If he has been defeated, still he has cast bread upon the waters which will return to give him triumph after a few days. But I ardently hope to hear of his election.

I am proud of the old Democratic party. In its ascendancy the Constitution and the Union are always safe. It has nobly adhered to its principles amidst the storm, and has not degraded itself by compromising with any of the isms of the day. For one, I should gladly receive into its fellowship such Whigs as have been too proud and too honest to become Know-Nothing Free Soilers; but this upon no other understanding than that they should join the party in principle and in heart. We shall have some converts; but I do not expect them to be very numerous.

I have not yet received an acknowledgment of or answer from the State Department relative to my resignation, to take effect on the 30th of September, nor any intimation of who is to be my successor. If he be *comme il faut*, and would arrive a fortnight before the time, I could give him a good start. For my own part, I am very anxious for the arrival of the time when I shall be relieved; and yet I should be ungrateful not

to appreciate the kindness of many Englishmen and English ladies.

I am now sitting in a room with a good fire. The weather during this spring has been unusually cold, and many persons here begin to entertain apprehensions for their wheat crop. It now appears to be very unpromising. I cannot imagine a greater calamity for this country than a short crop this year; and I hope, for the sake of the poor and needy, that it may be averted. These have suffered very much during the past winter.

Mr. Fillmore has arrived in this country, but has not yet reached London. I shall not be surprised should he be received with distinguished honors. So much has been said recently of the neglect of our distinguished countrymen, in contrast with the royal honors bestowed upon every little sprig of a German principality, that it is quite probable Mr. Fillmore may be made somewhat of a lion. Grund is, I understand, in London, but has not shown himself at the Legation. The arrivals of our countrymen are very numerous on their way to the Paris Exhibition; but this, at least so far, has proved a failure. John Bull still continues to cherish the war spirit. His pride has been deeply wounded by disasters in the Crimea, and the old gentleman will fight manfully to recover his prestige. He at length begins to succeed. With the kindest regards to Mrs. Jones and your family, I remain always sincerely your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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### TO ROBERT TYLER.<sup>1</sup>

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,

LONDON, 3d July, 1855.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have received your favor of the 7th ultimo. The election of Wise was indeed a glorious triumph of the right. It is long, very long, since any event has afforded me so much personal gratification. The man and the cause were both dear to

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<sup>1</sup> Letters and Times of the Tylers, II. 518.

me, and the man was worthy of the cause. Notwithstanding our victory in Virginia and the division of the Know-nothings in their convention in Philadelphia, we must not despise the strength of our enemy, and I am glad to perceive from the tenor of your letter that this accords with your own opinion. Many a good cause has been lost by over-confidence. My letters from the interior of our own State are encouraging. One of them says, "The panic among our friends has passed off; the energies of the Democracy are roused again. The strength of the Know-nothings has departed.

'They came as fleet as forest deer,  
We'll drive them back as tame.'"

I have been much gratified at your bearing in the contest. It has been eloquent and effective. I wish you all the success your heart could desire.

I shall send you some late London papers by the gentleman who bears this, which will give you the political news.

In regard to myself,—as the time approaches which will relieve me from this mission and take me home, I feel more and more anxious to return to my native land. I would be ungrateful should I not always retain a proper sense of the kindness with which I have been treated in this country, but yet I shall leave it with pleasure. It is certain that the governing classes have lost much in the estimation of the British people by their management of the war in the Crimea; but it is still very doubtful whether the present agitation in favor of administrative reform will prove successful. Nothing is more true than the old saying that "John Bull loves a Lord." Year after year reports are made in the House of Commons in favor of necessary and wholesome reforms; but year after year the efforts of reformers are baffled and defeated. The aristocracy dread any change in the existing system, and never yield to it unless the force of public opinion can no longer be resisted. Besides, this is certainly the age of mediocrity in England, and it would be difficult to find the right men for the higher places.

Miss Lane is now in the country, at the seat of Sir Fitz Roy Kelly, or she would desire to be most kindly remembered to Mrs. Tyler and yourself.

The presidency is a matter which I have dismissed from



my thoughts. I shall not be a candidate for that office, and have lost all desire to enjoy this most distinguished honor. Still, your position not to take a stand at too early a period in favor of any individual will be more justly appreciated. I do most sincerely desire that the Democracy may be able to agree upon a candidate who will unite all the factions of the party and be triumphantly elected. I understand that General Pierce's friends will urge him as a candidate. With what effect you can better judge than myself.

With my very kindest regards to Mrs. Tyler and my little favorites, I remain, as ever,

Sincerely your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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TO MR. JONES.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,

LONDON, Nov. 30, 1855.

MY DEAR SIR/

I should sooner have answered your favor of the 12th inst. had I known at the time of its receipt what to say about my return home. It was impossible for me to leave my post in a storm, and now that Mr. Appleton has gone home, I shall be obliged to remain here until the arrival of my successor, or at least until they send me out a Secretary of Legation.

You write in enthusiastic terms of the result of our late election in Pennsylvania, in all which I warmly sympathize. I regretted, however, to observe that our excellent friend Plumer had not a majority of all the votes cast. Our victory was, therefore, not so decided but that active vigilance is required to render our position secure at the Presidential election. We ought to receive into the party without hesitation, those honest and independent Clay Whigs who, without any compromise, are prepared to adopt our principles and battle with us against Knownothingism, Free Soilism, and all the other isms of the day.

I feel indebted to you for the caution you have given me about Mr. Sohl.



I earnestly trust and hope that ere this your old disease has been banished. This is no time for men to get sick who can enact so able and useful a part for your country as yourself. If I read the signs of the time aright, the next Presidential term will be the most important and responsible of any since the days of Washington. Still I entertain no serious fears for the Union, because when the people approach the precipice they will recoil from the abyss before them. Your plan is excellent for giving to the good and faithful Democrats of Pennsylvania their just share of influence in the Cincinnati Convention. The delegates from our State ought to act as a unit in that Convention, and thus they will be able to exercise a controlling influence in the selection of a candidate. This, in serving the best interests of the country, will redound to their own advantage. Louisiana had done well under all the circumstances, and I expected nothing from Massachusetts and New York; but I confess I have been greatly mortified and disappointed at the result of the election in Maryland.

One good effect of the present flare-up between Great Britain and the United States will be the direction of the public mind in this country toward the United States. The ignorance of the English people in regard to us is truly ridiculous. We have now become a topic of discussion in the newspapers, to which I have somewhat contributed, and shall be better known, and we find defenders where formerly we had opponents. When we meet I shall be able to give you amusing anecdotes of the ignorance of people, even in high places, in regard to our country. We are the more of a mystery to them on this account, and therefore the more imposing. They entertain vague apprehensions of our advancing power, and yet there is an undercurrent of self-satisfaction among them because of their having given birth to such a people.

The existing war with Russia is still popular with the masses, though there is not so much feeling on the subject as there was a year ago. They are conscious that their prestige as a military nation has been impaired and they wish to recover it before the close of the war. Not so Louis Napoleon. The French arms have acquired new glory, and the war has already made him the foremost man in Europe, with England as a subordinate ally. It is believed that he now desires to make peace.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. Jones and the members of your family, and in the hope that I may ere long enjoy the pleasure of meeting you and them, I remain always, very respectfully, your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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TO MR. JONES.

(*Private.*)

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,  
LONDON, Dec. 7, 1855.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 18th ultimo, for which accept my thanks. I am rejoiced that you are once more at your post, and, I trust, with renewed health, as you say nothing to the contrary in your letter. I am now anxiously awaiting the President's message, which we hope to receive on Monday the 17th by the steamer from Boston.

Rumors of peace have prevailed here for several days, and from all I can learn they rest upon better foundations than similar rumors have heretofore done. Austria is again the intermediary, and I venture to say that, should her propositions prove acceptable to the French and English Governments, as it is believed they have done, Louis Napoleon will take care that she shall join the allies, in case these propositions should be rejected by Russia. I shrewdly suspect, however, that Austria had consulted Russia before the terms were proposed. Besides, it would be madness for Russia to continue the war should the forces of Austria be added to those of the allies, and this very circumstance will save the honor of the Czar. From the high price of provisions and the pressure of the war, the poor of this country will suffer dreadfully throughout the present winter.

The *Times*, which is an Ishmaelite, as well as certain journals friendly to the Palmerston administration, while rejoicing that the news from America is so peaceful, still endeavors to keep up the delusion that the events threatening war all proceeded from our country. Upon this false assumption, they attribute them to the mere electioneering designs of the President to secure his renomination and reelection, and then praise the good sense and sober judgment of the American

people for restraining him within the proper bounds by the force of public opinion. This is the key to numerous articles in British journals. The greatest injustice is thus done to the President, and his character thus suffers on this side of the Atlantic. I have already vindicated him warmly whenever the occasion offered, but what can one person do in his intercourse with society to remove prejudices created by the press in this manner? After all, they can do no serious injury at home. Indeed, as I have often remarked, such palpable injustice will increase his popularity among the American people.

Pennsylvania has now the opportunity of enjoying that proud and influential position in the Union to which she is so justly entitled; and I am rejoiced that you fully appreciate it. The best and most trustworthy Democrats in her ranks ought to go to the Cincinnati Convention resolved to act as a unit in nominating that candidate who, under all the then existing circumstances, will be most likely to succeed, and be best calculated to advance the great interests of the country. You are a much better judge than myself as to future events; but yet I cannot concur with you in opinion that the triumph of the Democratic party in 1856 is beyond a peradventure. Both justice and sound policy require that we should receive into our ranks, with open arms, those national Whigs who agree with us in principle, and who are willing to enter them voluntarily without any compromise. It would be the worst policy in the world to drive them from us by unkindness.

I know that great efforts have been made for some time past to renominate the present President. This I have learned from different portions of the Union. Well, be it so; I have no objection; let his merits and his popularity be fairly weighed at the proper time in comparison with other candidates.

Of Wise I can never speak without grateful emotions. He has been my true, able, active, and efficient friend. His energy, patriotism, and moral courage cannot be excelled, and he has much more prudence than his enemies are willing to concede. I am warmly attached to the man, and, should the occasion ever offer, I shall esteem it a privilege to serve him.

Please to remember me always in the kindest terms to your wife and family. Remember me, also, most kindly to your Democratic colleagues from Pennsylvania, and believe me ever to be, sincerely your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

## TO MR. JONES.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,  
LONDON, Dec. 18, 1855.

MY DEAR SIR/

Your favor of the 22nd ult. did not reach me until the 10th inst. by the Pacific. I had not time to answer it on Friday last from numerous and pressing engagements, but now embrace the opportunity of addressing you a few lines by the Arago, which will leave Southampton to-morrow. I have scarcely the heart to write. On yesterday, I received the mournful intelligence of the death of my much-loved niece, Mary Baker, in San Francisco. I can scarcely think of anything but this sad event.

I had not supposed, until the receipt of your letter, that you would be a candidate for the United States Senate, though you are well qualified to fill that station with honor to yourself and advantage to the country. Should the choice fall upon you, I shall say Amen! with all my heart.

I had presumed from the manner in which you referred to the subject in one of your letters that your views were in another and different direction.

Some time before Mr. Appleton left me, I had placed it out of my power to interfere between the candidates *who had been my true and faithful friends*. I was strongly advised to this course by several friends who informed me that the candidates would be entirely satisfied with this conduct, and I declared that I would act upon their suggestion. While I cannot, therefore, interfere, I have nevertheless, since the receipt of your letter, informed one trusted friend of my high appreciation of your talents, character, and conduct, and I shall write to others in the same strain by the next steamer. This is no more than the justice which I owe to you, and I cannot go further without violating my word.

I shall now anxiously expect to hear by every steamer of the appointment of my successor. I am heartily tired of my present position, and still more so, if possible, since I have heard of the death of my poor niece.

I presume we shall have the Message on Monday next. It is expected here that it will assume a decided but prudent tone on the Central American questions. The British people are

prepared for this, and it will do good. It will be for the American people to say how I have conducted the negotiation until its termination. Ere this you have perceived that our ultimatum has been rejected in all its parts by the Palmerstonian Administration. In the disposition of the people of England, I should not be astonished if public opinion would require the British Government to reconsider its answer to the President's ultimatum and retrace its steps; provided the subject has been presented in a grave and serious aspect, which I have no doubt will prove to be the case.

Prince Esterhazy, the Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg, has left Vienna bearing the terms of peace suggested by Austria to France and England and accepted by them. War or peace now depends upon the decision of the Czar. If he be wise, he will accept the olive branch.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. Jones and your family, I remain always, very respectfully, your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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1856.

TO MR. JONES.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,  
LONDON, Feb. 19, 1856.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have just received your favor of the 4th inst., and have only had time to give it a cursory reading. I shall of course remain here until the arrival of Mr. Dallas, whom I expect by the Collins steamer which was to leave New York on the 16th inst. I trust I may not be disappointed. Whether I shall return home immediately after his arrival, or go to Paris and the Continent until the end of March, I have not determined. I am a wretched sailor and always sick at sea, and the roughest and longest passages are made in March. Everybody advises me not to select the season of the equinoctial gales for crossing the Atlantic. Besides, I have not yet been in Paris. I have not determined, however, what I shall do.



I shall direct this letter to Harrisburg, presuming you will be there on its arrival in the United States. Whatever may be the result of the spontaneous exertions of my friends in favor of my nomination, I shall have one source of satisfaction demanding my everlasting gratitude. My own noble State, God forever bless her! has not deserted me in the day of trial, but has covered me with the mantle of her power. Words would be but a vain expression of my feelings toward her noble Democracy; and if I were to employ such as my heart dictates, they would be considered extravagant.

Lord Palmerston, in two recent speeches in the House of Commons on the recruitment and Crampton question has done great injustice both to the Administration and myself. By stating part of the facts and suppressing the remainder inseparably connected with them, he has given the question a coloring far, very far different from the truth, as will appear when the correspondence is published. In great haste and with high esteem I remain always your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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TO MR. JONES.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES,

• LONDON, March 7, 1856.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have received your favor of the 18th ult., and note your prediction of my nomination. I confess I am not now and never have been sanguine; but time will show.

Well, I have now certain information, through Gen. Campbell, the Consul, that Mr. Dallas and his son, as Minister and Secretary of Legation, will be here in the Atlantic, about the middle of next week. It is my present purpose, soon after his arrival, to pay a brief visit to Paris and the Continent, and to reach home some time in April. It is more than probable I may embark from Havre; but I can settle nothing until Mr. Dallas shall make his appearance. Some friends advise me to remain abroad and others to come home immediately. In this contrariety of opinion I shall take my own course. Being a bad sailor, I do not choose to encounter the equinoctial gales



by leaving in the month of March. Besides, it would be absurd for me to return home without having seen Paris.

Mr. Dallas must have great faith in Gen. Pierce's reëlection, or he would not have accepted the mission and brought all his family with him.

I thank you for directing my attention to the subject of the Missouri Compromise. Would it be wise to make its constitutionality or the reverse a plank in the platform? Would it be good policy to make an assault upon those Democrats who maintained it in opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska bill, provided they are now willing in good faith to maintain the settlement as it exists? The question has been settled by Congress, and this settlement should be inflexibly maintained. We shall need all the strength we can honorably obtain. Then why go behind the existing law; and by doing so drive from our ranks many Northern Democrats, and many honest and independent anti-Free Soil Whigs who are quite willing to maintain that law as it stands?

It is well known how I labored, in company with Southern men, to have the Missouri line extended to the Pacific. But it was defeated, and the time for it has forever passed away. The only mode now left of putting down the fanatical and reckless spirit of abolition at the North, is to adhere to the existing settlement without the shadow of change, regardless of any storm which may be raised against it. "*Nolumus leges Angliæ mutare.*" This is altogether confidential and for yourself alone. I begin to receive interrogatories from the United States which I shall not answer, however easy this might be. I have now a well-written letter of this character before me from "Mr. James N. Shino," dated "Montezuma, Henrico County, Va., Feb. 11, 1856."

After the receipt of this, when you write, which I trust you will not fail to do, direct to me to the care of Hon. J. Y. Mason, United States Minister, Paris. Just drop your letter into the Post Office without prepayment, and it will come direct.

Ever your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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TO ROBERT TYLER.<sup>1</sup>

WHEATLAND, 7th May, '56.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have received your several kind letters; but to answer any letters at the present moment I sincerely regret is impossible. I do not get time even to read them all until after night or the next morning early. I have no person to assist me.

Wise is a glorious fellow, for whom I entertain the highest respect and warmest attachment. I thank you for the information about Virginia which you have communicated.

With the kindest regards of Miss Lane and myself for Mrs. Tyler, I remain always, your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

TO ROBERT TYLER.<sup>2</sup>

WHEATLAND, 23d May, '56.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have received your kind note of yesterday week and extract from Governor Wise. He is a noble fellow, to whom I have been warmly attached for many years, and I may say the same in regard to yourself, though you will admit I am no flatterer. *I fully appreciate your friendly services, and they are recorded in my heart.*

You have perhaps a little too much of the sensitiveness which belongs to genius. No man has ever intimated to me a doubt of your friendship. On the contrary, you are always spoken of with praise in my presence. It is but this morning that Forney spoke to me in strong terms of your efficient services.

I say to you now, what I would not have said to you last night, that should the "Old Dominion" stand firm, it is my opinion my friends will succeed at Cincinnati.

In haste, I remain always, your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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<sup>1</sup> Letters and Times of the Tylers, II. 525.

<sup>2</sup> Letters and Times of the Tylers, II. 526.

1857.

TO MR. JONES.

WHEATLAND, 17 February, 1857.

MY DEAR SIR/

I have reserved the question of your appointment to a seat in the Cabinet until the latest hour, hoping, as I anxiously wished and desired, that public opinion in Pennsylvania might justify my choice. I have seen and conversed with many substantial Democrats from the interior in no manner sympathizing with your opponents in Philadelphia, and have earnestly sought a response in your favor for the Cabinet; but in vain. Upon the whole, I have arrived at the conclusion that the interests of my administration in this State, as well as your own interest and comfort, especially in view of the terrific contest we may expect in October, will deprive me of your valuable services in the Cabinet. I have most reluctantly arrived at this conclusion. It happens, however, fortunately, that Governor Vroom has forwarded me his resignation and expressed a strong desire that I should send out his successor to Berlin as speedily as possible. It is therefore my purpose to present your name to the Senate for that highly respectable and important foreign mission immediately after my Cabinet shall have been confirmed; and permit me here to add that I think your mind and qualities are admirably adapted to that branch of the public service.

I have finally determined on all the members of the Cabinet except the Attorney-General; and it may be desirable under all the circumstances that I should appoint Judge Black to that place. Would you object to this appointment, should I deem it advisable? I should certainly appoint no other person than him from Pennsylvania.

With sentiments of enduring esteem and friendship, I remain,

Yours truly,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. J. GLANCY JONES.

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TO MR. JONES.

Sunday night, 22 Feb., 1857.

MY DEAR SIR/

I send you the enclosed letters for Mr. Appleton. Your letter and the whole affair have given me very great pain. I know not whom to select. Can you help me? In one thing I know you are mistaken: Black is not under the influence of the coterie in Philadelphia as you suppose. If it were not so important that you should be in Washington during the present week, I should like very much to see you here and show you my Inaugural. I do not intend to reach Washington before Monday, the 2nd of March. Perhaps you might run off for a day.

Always and under all circumstances your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. MR. JONES.

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TO MR. JONES.

WHEATLAND, 28 Feb., 1857.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have received your favor of the 26th instant by Mr. Lauman. The mission of Mr. Ward, undertaken from the purest motives of warm personal and political friendship for yourself, having failed, it now becomes my duty to ascertain whether you will release me from my promise not to appoint a Cabinet officer from Pennsylvania, if I should not deem it proper to appoint yourself. This is a matter purely between ourselves, with which no third persons have any right to interfere. Let me beseech you earnestly to weigh the gravity of your decision on this point and the consequences which may result from it, before it shall be finally made.<sup>1</sup>

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

HON. J. GLANCY JONES.

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<sup>1</sup>Mr. Jones apparently gave the desired release, as Judge Black was made Attorney General.

TO ROBERT TYLER.<sup>1</sup>

SOLDIERS' HOME, October 10, 1857.

MY DEAR SIR:

Seated comfortably at this place preparing my message, and having just heard the favorable news from Kansas, I confess your note of yesterday, this moment brought from town, has given me much uneasiness. It is the first intimation I have ever received from any quarter that a serious doubt existed as to the success of the Democratic candidates in the city and county of Philadelphia. I cherish the hope that you have written in a moment of gloom, and that the result on next Tuesday will disappoint your apprehensions. It would be the last calamity for Philadelphia at the present moment to become a Black Republican city, and thereby throw herself into the arms of the disunionists. I shall not believe it till I see it. I am always most happy to see you.

Your friend always,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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1858.TO ROBERT TYLER.<sup>2</sup>

WASHINGTON, February 15, 1858.

MY DEAR SIR:

Many thanks for your kind favor of the 12th. I agree with you; it is quite necessary that all the Federal officers in Philadelphia should be a unit in action. Without this, they neutralize the administration and leave it powerless. I desire to recognize the wing of the party to which Mr. John Miller belongs, and like him personally. I have thought of Dr. Sturgeon's place for him. What think you of it?

The Kansas question brightens daily. Everybody with the least foresight can perceive that, Kansas admitted, and the Black Republican party are destroyed; whilst Kansas rejected, and

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<sup>1</sup> Letters and Times of the Tylers, II. 540.<sup>2</sup> Letters and Times of the Tylers, II. 544.

they are rendered triumphant throughout the Northern States. Besides, above all, I very much fear that the fate of the Union is involved. How I do mourn over Wise and his defection! Would to Heaven I could have avoided this heart-felt wound.

With my kindest regards to Mrs. Tyler and my little favorites, believe me to be always very respectfully, your friend,  
JAMES BUCHANAN.

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TO ROBERT TYLER.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, October 3, 1858.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have received your favor of the first instant. You have indeed performed your entire duty as chairman of the State Committee. Whatever may be the result of the election, you may feel proudly conscious that none of your predecessors have written addresses equal to your own. Indeed, they have been marked by signal ability and excellent good sense. I am sorry you have been so badly sustained.

Mr. W. has been treated very leniently, and this according to my wishes. He has never seemed to recognize in its true character the nature of the offense for which he was removed.

From your friend, very respectfully,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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1859.

TO ROBERT TYLER.<sup>2</sup>

WASHINGTON, 15th October, 1859.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have received yours of the 15th instant. I have an instinct in such matters, created by long experience, and I per-

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<sup>1</sup> Letters and Times of the Tylers, II. 552.

<sup>2</sup> Letters and Times of the Tylers, II. 553.



ceive the certain symptoms of triumph in Pennsylvania in 1860. The Democracy will then be thoroughly aroused against Seward.

I shall be most happy to see you in Washington, and trust you will come directly to the White House and make it your home during your visit.

I shall make your request known to Mr. Holt respecting Messrs. Ray and Wynan; but if their services are not required, there is an end of the matter.

Your friend, as ever,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

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1860.

TO ROBERT TYLER.<sup>1</sup>

WASHINGTON, 13th June, 1860.

MY DEAR SIR:

Do you wish me to place the letter of Captain Maddox to yourself on file? Also that of Mr. Iverson to him?

I am sure that you will think I ought occasionally to make an appointment according to my own wishes and judgment. I know the officers of the marine corps tolerably well, and I intend to exercise this privilege upon the present occasion. Although S—— has not yet been removed, nor is it yet ascertained that he will be a defaulter, yet the applications are already numerous for his place. *Your friend M—— will never be behind in this race.*

I return Mr. Campbell's letter according to your request. Immediately upon its receipt I spoke to the Secretary of War upon the subject, and he informed me that the rule as to the length of time a surgeon should remain at West Point had been changed, and that Dr. Campbell was the first whom this change had affected. He gave me strong reasons for the change, which I have not time to repeat. His successor, Dr. Hammond, has seen much hard service in New Mexico and our remote frontiers. So says Gov. Floyd, who informs me it is too late

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<sup>1</sup> Letters and Times of the Tylers, II. 558.

to recall Dr. Hammond's appointment. I am sorry I did not know the facts in time. I believe the service of a surgeon at West Point has been reduced to two years.

I have hardly time now to say my prayers. Should they succeed at Baltimore in rejecting the regular delegates from the seceding States and admitting those who are "*bogus*," then Douglas will or may be nominated. In that event the unity and strength of the Democratic party is annihilated and Lincoln elected. This is not the worst. The Democratic party will be divided and sectionalized, and that too on the slavery issue. Everything looks bad, not only for the party, but for the country. The information from New York is not very encouraging.

In haste, always sincerely your friend,

JAMES BUCHANAN.

P. S. I hope you will be to see us ere long and stop at my house if you like the entertainment.

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